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OXFORDThe College proposes to
elect an

Official Fellow

and

Tutor in English

with effect from October 1,
1980. The Fellowship, which
is open to candidates of
both sexes, is available in
conjunction with a Univer-
sity Lectureship (C.U.F.)
which, however, in present
financial circumstances will
not be available until
January 1, 1982.Application, giving par-
ticulars of qualifications and
experience, and the names
of three referees, should be
made by Friday, March 28,
1980, to the Rector, Lincoln
College, Oxford, OX1 3DR,
from whom further particu-
lars may be obtained.LINCOLN COLLEGE
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THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

RESEARCH IN INFORMATION
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Social Sciences and Humanities

Information Science Studentships
and Post-Doctoral FellowshipsApplications are invited from well-qualified graduates for con-
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obtain by October 1980, at least an upper first class honours
degree in a relevant subject. Candidates for post-doctoral fellow-
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Current research in the School includes studies of the information
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7 MARCH 1980

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A legend and its legacy

By Kenneth O. Morgan

GWYN A. WILLIAMS:

Madoc
The Making of a Myth
225pp. Eyre Methuen. £8.50.
0 413 39450 X

Welsh history has been fertile with many legends. Throughout the centuries, myth and reality have gone hand in hand. During the Middle Ages, an enduring sense of national identity owed much to the belief that the Welsh were lineal descendants of Brutus, the grandson of Aeneas of Troy. In the hands of Geoffrey of Monmouth, this was powerfully reinforced by the cult of Arthur, a warrior king who had repelled the invasion of the Saxons and had gone on to conquer much of northern Europe, and perhaps overseas territories such as Iceland and Greenland as well. Cadwaladr was another mythical hero so commemorated. The Arthurian legend was extended by lavish use of the mysterious prophecies of Merlin or Myrddin, which forecast the eventual triumph of the Welsh and their life during the Tudor period. Fortified by these legends, the medieval Welsh, conquered in war, politically fragmented, continued to believe in their glorious past and their prophetic future. Just as Welsh nationality partly relied on myth to sustain it, so, too, did the sense of political subjection. The potent legend of the Saxons' 'treachery of the long knives' (*Brdd y Cyllyll Iffri*) lived on as a symbol of alien oppression imposed by covert and dishonourable means. The Educational Commissioners of 1846, who so ignorantly condemned Welsh cultural and religious life in the 'treachery of the blue books' (*Brdd y Llyfrau Gleision*), were but a later embodiment of this potent idea. No doubt there will be further vehicles for the treachery theme (Sir Keir Joseph and the British Steel Corporation perhaps?) in years to come. Radical forces as well as conservative forces are the beguiling force of legend. The early socialist movement in Wales in the present century drew inspiration from the belief (a kind of Cymric version of the 'Norman yoke' theory) that pre-conquest Wales was a classless, democratic society and the eldest-fod kind of bardic trade unionism, political and economic, stifled the native freeborn genius.

But perhaps no legend that endured in popular recollection was more long-lived, certainly none more remarkable, than that of Madoc. This usually took the form of a tale that, in the year 1170, Prince Madoc, the son of Owain Gwynedd, tired of civil wars in Wales, sailed across the western ocean and discovered America, three centuries before Columbus. Further, as the legend developed, it was claimed that Madoc returned to Wales and then sailed forth a second time, to found a colony in America. This colony was to survive, leaving a people of Welsh-speaking Indians, identifiable by their light skin, fairer hair and forms of speech that drew upon the Welsh language ('penguin' or 'white head' being one popular example—despite the undeniably black heads that those birds, in fact, possess). From popular folklore as well, Cadwaladr was another mythical hero so commemorated. The Arthurian legend was extended by lavish use of the mysterious prophecies of Merlin or Myrddin, which forecast the eventual triumph of the Welsh and their life during the Tudor period. Fortified by these legends, the medieval Welsh, conquered in war, politically fragmented, continued to believe in their glorious past and their prophetic future. Just as Welsh nationality partly relied on myth to sustain it, so, too, did the sense of political subjection. The potent legend of the Saxons' 'treachery of the long knives' (*Brdd y Cyllyll Iffri*) lived on as a symbol of alien oppression imposed by covert and dishonourable means. The Educational Commissioners of 1846, who so ignorantly condemned Welsh cultural and religious life in the 'treachery of the blue books' (*Brdd y Llyfrau Gleision*), were but a later embodiment of this potent idea. No doubt there will be further vehicles for the treachery theme (Sir Keir Joseph and the British Steel Corporation perhaps?) in years to come. Radical forces as well as conservative forces are the beguiling force of legend. The early socialist movement in Wales in the present century drew inspiration from the belief (a kind of Cymric version of the 'Norman yoke' theory) that pre-conquest Wales was a classless, democratic society and the eldest-fod kind of bardic trade unionism, political and economic, stifled the native freeborn genius.

It is this theme that forms the basis of Gwyn A. Williams' wholly fascinating and enchanting book. He has covered aspects of the story before, notably in a recent work on the Welsh-American settlement founded by Morgan John Rhys at Beulah, Pennsylvania, in the 1790s. In addition, as he explains with characteristic generosity, his work was in part launched by the researches of that marvellous Pembrokehire polymath, David Williams, Professor of Welsh History at Aberystwyth from 1945 to 1967, Voltairean Baptist, transatlantic Welshman extraordinary, one of the giants of twentieth-century British history, whose account of John Evans' 'strange journey' along the Upper Missouri in 1795-96 appeared in the *American Historical Review* in 1949. David Williams was the direct inspiration for many in Wales (including, if it may be added, the present reviewer). But Gwyn Williams' *Madoc: The Making of a Myth* is the first comprehensive history of this absorbing theme: it will surely prove the definitive one. This is transatlantic history at its most enjoyable, a

combination of detective work (one imagines Professor Williams in his Downland deerstalker), imaginative literary recreation, and wide learning that provides one of the most attractive works of history to appear for many years.

The Madoc legend evolved in three phases. The first owed its wider impact to John Dee, that bizarre London Welsh astrologer-antiquarian who has loomed so large in recent accounts of sixteenth-century intellectual life. It was Frances Yates, Keith Thomas and others. Dee was, among many other things, part of that new centrality of the Welsh in the public life of the Tudor period, when the myths of Brutus and of Arthur or Merlin seemed to have found fulfilment under the progeny of Owen Tudor. Dee was a propagandist for imperialism; indeed, he coined the term 'British Empire', using neither word as it would have been understood by his nineteenth-century successors, but rather as a claim to the title of the new world, based on the early pioneering by the medieval Welsh. Dee's fantasies fitted in with ocean-going venturing by Elizabethan seafarers anxious to frustrate the Spaniards and others. It was as a result of a fulgure by his friend Sir Humphrey Gilbert in 1583 that Dee first publicly proclaimed the Tudor right to territories and dominions across the seas, based on the dynasty's descent from 'Madock ap Owen Gwynedd'. He and everyone else were very vague about precisely where Madoc was thought to have landed. The location varied from Greenland to Newfoundland; on the mainland, from Labrador to the Gulf of Mexico. Dee quoted a speech by the Aztec Montezuma which asserted that the omnipresent Madoc had been the founder of his house in Mexico.

But, however uncertain in detail, the myth was widely circulated. In 1585, Walter Raleigh used the Madoc voyage as the basis for Queen Elizabeth's claim to the island of Virginia. Hakluyt's *Voyages* in 1589 lodged the Madoc myth in popular British consciousness, drawing on such familiar Welsh texts as David Powell's *History of Cambria* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of Britain*. Wales was a key to the British thrust into the new world, the basis for a new imperialism. But as Gwyn Williams shows, the Madoc theme was already far wider in appeal. There was a Madoc who

figured in medieval romance in French and Flemish literature, in the Orkney Saga of the Norsemen and in the story of the Zeal brothers of Venice who discovered the series of (imaginary) islands in the northern seas. Through the reworking of an old tradition, Madoc became vital to the cult of exploration and to the cosmic consciousness of western Europe.

The second phase of the Madoc myth concerned, mainly, the Madogwys, the further tale that Madoc left behind him a scribble of Welsh-speaking Indians in the heart of the American west. Madoc's descent upon America was now confidently located on the mainland and thus became caught up in the continental expansion and rivalries of the English, French and Spanish in North America. Legends of Madoc were current in Anglo-Welsh literature throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Herbert's *Description of the Persian Monarchy* in 1834 powerfully reinforced Madoc's prestige and cited evidence of Welsh influence in the dialects and natural history of the people of Mexico. The Madoc cult was endorsed even by that learned savant, Edward Lloyd. Madoc struck new popular roots in the writings of a mystical Breconshire clergyman, Theophilus Evans, whose *Drych y Prif Oesod* ('Mirror of the Early Ages') in its second edition of 1740 made elaborate use of the Madoc fable. It emphasized the way in which prince's descendants had merged with the Indian natives 'like milk with water'—an analogy sure to appeal to Cardiganshire dairymen. From the 1760s there was a tidal wave of Welsh Indian stories; the Welsh Indians became the personification of Welsh freedom and self-realization. The Madogwys became the repositories of the hopes and dreams of an oppressed generation, amid the swirling currents of the 1790s, side by side with the repression and persecution of the Pitt regime. There were born in this ferment a new Welsh politics, a new Welsh nationalism, a new Welsh industrial society, a new Welsh nonconformity, too, not least through a kind of Baptist international which created permanent and durable links

that existed in Wales at the time was swamped by a new revolutionary ferment. It galvanised the Welsh dissenting or freethinking intelligentsia from Denbigh to the Vale of Glamorgan. The idea of the 'White Padoucas', or the Welsh Indians, emerging from pre-history like some Cymric Atlantis, became the very symbol of a new, natural settlement of the 'Jacobin' Welsh, reinterpreting their usable past and setting it against this explosive transatlantic ideology. The fact that no specific Indian tribe yet discovered could be linked with the 'Padoucas' was immaterial. This new ideology became, in a quite distinct sense, Welsh nationalism, though it was always a nationalism of an outward-looking and non-exclusive kind. The idea of the Welsh Indians blended, too, with the dream of a *Gwladfa*, a national home for the freeborn Welsh in the far west, a sort of Zion in the wilderness, untainted by the pressures of Anglo-Saxon imperialism. It fired the imagination of Morgan John Rhys, that incandescent, restless prophet who founded a new settlement for the Welsh on the banks of the Ohio. It captured the mind of William Jones of Llangadfan in Montgomeryshire, that marginal self-taught Voltairian who articulated the very essence of the Welsh enlightenment.

Most powerful of all, it provided a grist for the whirling mill of Edward Williams of Llanercarfan, the immortal Iolo Morgannwg, a schizophrenic product of the two cultures of the Vale of Glamorgan. Iolo has been much deified as the inventor of forged medieval poetry and of fake Druids; he made up most of the *Ku Klux Klan*ishness of the modern *isteddofde gorsedd*. But in reality he was a powerful prophet of what the Welsh later termed 'unhistoric nationalism'. In the hands of an inspired, zany prophet like Iolo, the Welsh Indians became the personification of Welsh freedom and self-realization. The Madogwys became the repositories of the hopes and dreams of an oppressed generation, amid the swirling currents of the 1790s, side by side with the repression and persecution of the Pitt regime. There were born in this ferment a new Welsh politics, a new Welsh nationalism, a new Welsh industrial society, a new Welsh nonconformity, too, not least through a kind of Baptist international which created permanent and durable links

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John 13:16

The rise of the West

By Zbyněk Zeman

JOHN BOWLE:

A History of Europe
628pp. Secker and Warburg/Heinemann. £12.50 (£9.95 until 31/3/80)
0 436 05906 1

Contemporary historians who write ambitious works of synthesis are more likely to come out with a history of the world than of Europe. Perhaps this is because they do not want to appear parochial; or because the existence of Europe as a separate historical unit, or aware of how Europe's civilization was nourished from outside, and how much it spilled over European borders, John Bowle suffers from no such inhibitions. His Europe needs no defining: it is a Europe of states and nations, in the West as well as the East, the kind of Europe President de Gaulle used to have in mind.

The book is subtitled "A Cultural and Political Survey" and a survey is exactly what it is. Bowle is good at giving a certain kind of overview, at describing who was doing what at a particular time. Comparative chronologies are inserted into most of his chapters, and very interesting they sometimes are (they are essential for the specialist reader). His touch is at its surest when he deals with the peoples of the Atlantic coast of Europe, who found themselves on the margins of classical civilization, and who became the four great colonising powers: Portugal, Spain, France and Britain. He shows how, some time before the end of the thirteenth century, those peoples had managed to organize themselves into cohesive realms under their respective dynasties.

Bowle limbers up, however, with a brief description of the prehistoric hunters, and then takes the reader on a compulsory and extended tour of Hellenic Greece and classical Rome. In the early medieval period he falls to consider some of the most significant ways in which the inhabitants of Europe became what they were. By the time we get to the first Crusade, the English, the French and the Germans, as well as the corresponding national units—"England" or "France" or even "Russia" far to the east—are all there in the book, for the purposes of historical narrative. But we are not told where they could be

found on the map nor how they got there. The reason for this probably is that historians tend to disregard the work of philologists, and here Bowle is no exception. The development of European languages, as described for instance by W. B. Lockwood, contains an important political element: how and why men came to speak the same language, and how the areas where a certain language was spoken expanded or contracted. Such connections between politics and language illuminate the formation of the basic units of European history, but the author of this latest history of Europe denies the reader any glimpse of it.

On the other hand, Bowle is keenly aware of the differences between Eastern and Western styles of government and ways of life. The transition from compact Western kingdoms, where the writ of the central government affected all its subjects more or less evenly, across the fragmented, precarious autonomy of the Central and East European rulers, to the autocratic style of Muscovy, where the Tsar suffered no nonsense from the nobles, is well brought out, especially for the sixteenth century. The contrast between the maritime environment of the North European periphery and the land-locked countries of Central and Eastern Europe comes across as a historical fact of some importance.

This strong awareness of historical contrast is present, however, only in the general parts of the survey, where comparisons are being made; it fades out when Bowle turns to consider the histories of individual countries. Here, he too often falls back on historical stereotypes. At the end of the sixteenth century, for instance, "the need for a warrior king eclipsed even the Polish love for aristocratic anarchy" or in Bohemia at about the same time, "the incompatibility between the Czechs and the Germans conditioned politics".

When a historian chooses to sketch individual figures against a sweeping background, he must be careful to fill in the details; otherwise, his figures become caricatures, and the background blurs beyond recognition. Bowle's way of writing history does not entirely

protect him from this danger. There are parts, reflections of his own writing, and an easy acceptance of cumulative folk wisdom regarding national characteristics. The Germans, for instance, preferred their gods to be treacherous and warlike, whereas the Slavs propitiated spirits of the woods and of water; in the Gaelic tribesmen descending on Rome the author detects a quality of "Celtic inconsequence". But Bowle's real bêtes noires are the Vikings, who "combined boasting in their cups with a passion for litigation and must have been tremendous bore".

The main theme of the book is more ambitious than its subtitle suggests. This survey he intended to demonstrate how Europeans came to develop their resources and their own original civilization and how, after a period of decline of Greco-Roman civilization, Europe became the dominant influence in the world. There are parts of the book where Bowle succeeds admirably in this aim. For instance, he sets aside much space for a discussion of Isidore of Seville's seventh-century *Etymologiae*, pointing out that the work contributed, a millennium later, to Sir Thomas Browne's *Vulgar Errors*. He is very informative on stained-glass windows, and pauses to tell us in a footnote that in the Dordogne there is a starved Michelin hotel called after the Cro-Magnon man. His excursions into the cultural development of Europe are usually a pleasure to read, though there are places where they become mere lists of names and dates, as in the case of musicians in the nineteenth century, towards the end of the book.

It may be that his survey would have been much strengthened had he dealt differently with the beginning and the end of his story. The beginning is too leisurely and the end too rushed. The paleolithic hunters, like the inhabitants of classical Rome, only happened to live on the territory of Europe; otherwise, they had about as much in common with each other as they have with contemporary Europeans. Greco-Roman civilization is described in great detail; but the reader is not given a clear enough idea of how different was the classical legacy which was gradually absorbed by medieval Europe, or what kind of filters it had passed through by the time it

reached, say, a scholar in Paris in the early thirteenth century.

The point made in the opening section of the book could have been made more crisply: towards the end, on the other hand, there are subjects which the author has preferred not to examine. He takes us briskly past the milestones along the road to ruin, the "mechanised barbarism" of the twentieth century. The destruction of Europe in the two world wars is touched on, but that destruction was not total. There is a paragraph or two on the EEC, leaving one with an impression of faint political hope for the future. Indeed, the last chapter, which deals with technological revolution and political eclipse, is a brief elegy for the betrayal of a high promise. Since 1914, according to Bowle, nationalism has no longer inspired idealists but exponents of ruthless political realism; and other things have gone wrong as well. In particular, he does not like looking too closely at industrial society or at its enemies, internal and external. A history of Europe, published in 1980, which does not once mention the name of Adolf Hitler is an undertaking of far-reaching idiosyncrasy.



A Russian armchair, inscribed and dated 1838, one of the items in a sale to be held at Christie's London, on Thursday, March 27.

A captive audience for democracy

By Michael Howard

HARRY SULLIVAN:
Thresholds of Peace
German Prisoners and the People of Britain 1944-48
420pp. Hamish Hamilton. £10.
0 241 89662 5

The Second World War left rather more than three million German prisoners of war in British hands, of whom 400,000 ended up in Britain. There they remained, most of them, for a year or even longer. British historians have so far shown as little interest in their treatment as did the British people at the time. At best it has been seen as a kind of technical appendix to the history of the war proper. In fact it was a matter of far greater importance. On the treatment of these men depended the mood in which they went home, and on that depended the nature of the new Germany: the outcome, in fact, of the war itself. For anyone who regards that conflict as anything more than a gladiatorial combat, therefore, Harry Sullivan's book, probably the first and certainly the most comprehensive British treatment of the subject, must be essential reading.

Thresholds of Peace is a quite unacademic study. Mr Sullivan tells us that there are "many relevant documents in the Public Record Office", but he does not tell what they are and does not seem to have made much use of them. His book is instead a mosaic of personal memories, mainly elicited through interviews or communications to the author himself. It is a method that has its drawbacks. Sullivan's attempt to impose order on the material is not always successful, and one sometimes feels that

a solid framework of reference within which to assess the decisions, controversies and developments at official levels where policy was laid down by the British government, than states, and certainly does not document, his view that the Attlee administration was too busy building a new Britain to bother much about this legacy from the wartime years. It is regarded primarily as cheap agricultural labour. Now we are told much about the legal background, particularly the all-important distinction between Prisoners of War who were subject to the Geneva Convention and "Surrendered Enemy Personnel" who were not. For academics in search of a topic, he has left plenty to do.

Nevertheless he has got his priorities right. The book is written from the point of view of the prisoners themselves rather than their captors. We are told what happened to them from the moment they surrendered; how they were moved, how they were interrogated, how they were treated en route to the camps, and above all what the various camps were like (although, alas, we are never given such valuable information as how many camps there were and how many men were in each). Yet more important, Mr Sullivan shows us how and why the minds of the Germans, overwhelmingly loyal to National Socialism at the time of their capture, were gradually changed. And most important of all, he shows us how the minds of their British captors were gradually changed: the minds, not only of those who considered the only good German to be a dead German, but of those who were asked to educate the Germans in basic Anglo-Saxon democratic values.

For what happened was not the result of any official policy, rather the result of a spontaneous order, the result of a process which

assisted by the initiative of a handful of remarkably intelligent men in key positions, the common sense of a much larger number of officials and soldiers who had to administer the camps, and, most important of all, the good nature of the British people themselves who, after the first bitterness had evaporated, insisted on treating the Germans as they met as human beings, thus realising their self-respect and their confidence in mankind.

Initially the task seemed almost impossible, and but for the total defeat of the Third Reich it probably would have been impossible. If anyone still believes that the policy of "unconditional surrender" was a mistake, they should read this book. Till the very end of the war the camps were in the grip of hard-line Nazi fanatics ruling where necessary by terror but more often with the support of the great mass of their *Führertruppen* companions. The British guards could seldom protect themselves even from "execution". Only the extinction of the *Führer* himself could destroy the authority wielded on his behalf, and leave a vacuum in the minds of his followers. Well-meaning lectures on "the nature of democracy" by the Germans themselves, each slowly finding his own way back to sanity. The British authorities soon abandoned the attempt to force "re-education" down their throats. Instead, by information, example, and ultimately by allowing them to mix freely with the local population, they showed them how a democratic society functioned, and there can have been few prisoners who returned home unconvinced of its virtues.

The early days were pretty terrible, and Mr Sullivan does not try to conceal this. But this was due far more to the appalling administrative problems of coping with the millions of prisoners than to any deliberate brutality. Even the revelations about the German concentration camps produced rather a determination to rob the prisoners' noses in the horrific task than any desire to take it out on them personally. But the administrative problems gradually sorted themselves out. Certainly the British were extraordinarily good in being able to find so many good commandants for the camps, and a job that always attracts first-class material. Obviously there were some duds; but there were also some outstanding successes, mainly men who had been prisoners themselves. There were also a few men of extraordinary insight and capacity such as Herbert Sulzbach, Henry Faulk and Heinz Koeppeler, who were put in positions as interrogators, administrators and educators where they had an influence out of all proportion to their rank. And not least important, in this time of spiritual agony, were the clergy, whose pastoral care extended far beyond the ranks of the committed Christians for whom they were primarily responsible—and who did much to increase those ranks.

The retention of the prisoners in this country for so long, especially as forced labour, when they were so badly needed at home, may seem to argue the indignation of a new and sensitive generation. But the feeling among the British at the time that they were owed some reparation by the Germans for hands was undeniably strong, and fell far short of vindictiveness. Besides, as Mr Sullivan shows, the time was not wasted. In their camps the British people and the German captives came to know and respect each other, and the foundations of a new relationship were laid. It was not until after the war that the process of this process is deeply moving.

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The Barnum of the baton

By Samuel Lipman

ABRAM CHASINS:
Leopold Stokowski
A Profile
330pp. New York: Hawthorn Books. \$14.95.

With conductors, it seems, longevity is almost all. Pianists can die tragically young and yet be granted, as in the case of Dmitri Lippatti and William Kapell, the status of myth. Among violinists the name of Ginette Neveu is not yet forgotten. But for the chiefs of the baton only great age properly completes a career; significantly, Guido Cantelli, the one exception to this rule, gained his *cachet* as much from the praise of the venerable Toscanini as from his own work. In general the record is plain: with Toscanini, Bruno Walter, Pierre Monteux, Adrian Boult—and now Karl Böhm—all criticism is softened by our awe at the mere existence of these survivors, who in directing the music give every evidence of telling us about life.

In this limited circle of the wise, one may well see Leopold Stokowski as an anomaly. The very image of his career was, rather than age, flesh rather than spirit. Like many other matinee idols he struggled against appearing old, and towards this end he falsified his birth date, often giving the holy year as 1887 or even 1889 rather than the correct 1882. He also stated on occasion that he was born in Pomerania rather than London. Fortunately the existence of his birth certificate in Somerset House makes it possible at least to begin an account of his life with fact.

The son of a Polish father and an Irish mother, he was early exposed to music. After childhood studies on the piano and organ, in 1896 he entered the Royal College of Music, where he studied with Henry Walford Davies and Sir Charles Villiers Stanford; prior to his graduation in 1904 he found time to spend a

year at The Queen's College, Oxford. Though he later claimed that the violin was his favourite instrument, his major musical training was in the organ, and it was as an organist that he obtained his first job in 1902 at St James's Church in Piccadilly. In 1905 he accepted a better post at the rich church of St Bartholomew in New York City. Here he made a name for himself as an imaginative and provocative musical force.

The organ was plainly too restricted a métier to keep such a man fully occupied. With practically no orchestral conducting experience he became conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony in 1909. His success there was so great that he was able to negotiate secretly for the leadership of the Philadelphia Orchestra, then fallen on hard musical times. He arrived in Philadelphia in 1912, leaving an angry board behind in Cincinnati. He remained there as chief until 1936, and during his long tenure he established the orchestra as perhaps the best in the world; that judgment was concurred in by no less great and hyper-critical a figure than Sergei Rachmaninoff.

It was not only the lushness of the sound and the affecting quality of the interpretations which marked the Philadelphia playing at this time. Stokowski programmed a vast amount of music which was both new and difficult for his conservative audience. In 1916 he gave the first American performance of Mahler's Eighth Symphony: the fact that the players and chorus required enable the work to be accurately entitled *The Symphony of a Thousand* hardly escaped public sensation. A smaller but none the less momentous undertaking was his 1932 presentation, also for the first time in America, of Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*. In addition to these monuments he played contemporary music of every school, quality, and level of seriousness.

Stokowski's triumph in Philadelphia was great, not least for his combination of intense personal appeal to audiences—especially the feminine half thereof—and the commercial success of the many phonograph records Stokowski delighted in conducting and generally superintending. But the Depression forced retrenchment even in an orchestra as well funded as the Philadelphia; this retrenchment provided an opportunity for the board to apply pressure against Stokowski's interest in new music. Though he resisted and continued to play what he wanted—which, it must be said, included such crowd-pleasers as gargantuan transcriptions of Bach and the most toothsome romantic lieder—heuristics—the lure of Hollywood with its big audiences and big money encouraged him to leave Philadelphia for what seemed a golden future.

In fact Hollywood must have been a disappointment for him. In his first film, *The Big Broadcast* of 1937, he appeared only as the conductor of two of his Bach transcriptions. In his next film, *One Hundred Men and a Girl*, made with Deanna Durbin, he emerged as a clumsy actor—though at least the movie career, sterile though it was to prove, was undoubtedly his collaboration with Walt Disney in *Fantasia* (1940). Under Stokowski's continual prodding the film made a brief marriage between Disney's animation techniques and classical music in virtuoso performances. Few who have seen the film will ever forget the obsessive power of Disney's treatment of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* of Dukas, or the eerie atmosphere communicated by Stokowski's performance of *The Rite of Spring*. Unfortunately, the film did not do well at the box office, and the very individuality of its format seems to have precluded a sequel.

Stokowski now returned to full-time orchestral conducting. Always an admirer of youth, he founded the

All-American Youth Orchestra in 1940, a group made up mostly of players between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five. After an effective South American tour, war manpower needs required the dropping of the word youth from the orchestra's title. The whole enterprise soon collapsed, however, after a transcontinental United States tour in 1941, and its only legacies were a few phonograph records and the impetus given to the training of native-born American orchestral players, in particular women.

At about the same time Stokowski became co-conductor (joining Toscanini) of the NBC Symphony. But when it became clear that Toscanini wished to stay with the NBC, and that furthermore he mightily disliked both Stokowski's cavalier way with sacred musical texts and the particular kind of sound he demanded from the orchestra, Stokowski's position became untenable. As usual, Stokowski responded by occupying himself with something new. In 1944 he founded the New York City Symphony Orchestra, publicly supported and housed, which he conducted without fee. Though he was again successful here, the Ad Lure of Hollywood still existed. He returned to California in 1945 to conduct the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, to whose concerts audiences of up to 20,000 could listen during warm summer evenings.

But still he moved on; when it seemed that he might fill the vacuum at the New York Philharmonic left by the sudden (though hardly unprovoked) resignation of Arturo Rodzinski, Stokowski returned to New York, where he conducted the Philharmonic for several years in more concerts than any other conductor. These concerts were applauded by both public and press, but in 1950 he lost the permanent leadership of the orchestra to Dimitri Mitropoulos. The post in San Francisco proved no more available to Stokowski, for there he

was beaten by the talented but unenvied Enrique Jordá.

In 1955, however, Stokowski settled—at least in theory—in Houston, where all money and the Texas ability to think big might have been thought to provide a proper field for his Barnum-like talents. But Houston failed him too; the local audiences did not like his outlandish programming, and he did not see any point in becoming a full-time resident of a frontier town. So on he went. In the 1960-61 season he had a difficult time filling in for Mitropoulos at the Metropolitan Opera. At least in this period he did return to Philadelphia for extended guest conducting, where he was received with open arms. He found it easy to turn the comfortable sound favoured by his successor Eugene Ormandy into his own more glamorous and personal brand.

At the age of eighty he founded, again for young and relatively inexperienced players, the American Symphony Orchestra in New York. Again he served without fee, and indeed contributed his own money to the enterprise. Not only did he initiate a furious round of orchestral auditions for all comers; he kept voluminous records so that a pool of talent might be made permanently available. He continued to give important premises; in 1965 he presented, with this new and raw orchestra, the first performance of the Fourth Symphony of Charles Ives, a work requiring (at least on introduction) the services of three conductors and innumerable rehearsals.

By the early 1970s his public conducting days were coming to an end. In 1972 he moved back to England. He gave some live concerts, but above all he continued to record and at the end he was working under a contract which would have taken him to the age of 100. Not surprisingly, death overtook him over even such bravado. Stokowski died

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So—at least to this listener—the Stokowski records remain musically incomplete. Curiously, they seem so, especially when compared to earlier, technologically vastly more primitive recordings of the same works by some of his greatest contemporaries. Two prime examples of Stokowski's musical shortcomings may be found in his late recordings of the Brahms Fourth Symphony (with the New Philharmonia Orchestra) and the Beethoven



It is perhaps central to any understanding of Stokowski that he did not distinguish between different ranks of music. Mr Chasins put it well in a recent New York radio interview:

So the verdict on Stokowski must be that he was a man of great talent for shaping the physical sound of an orchestra. He used this talent to attract attention to himself; in the process he got people who might otherwise have been turned off by music and at the same time he delivered a simplified and popularized music to these new listeners. In many ways he was the first modern musician, his willingness to play any kind of music by his piquant personal life, by his partnership with technology, by his inability for the last forty years of his life to be tied down to any one city and his ceaseless search for all by his ceaseless search for notoriety, he epitomized the conversion of the conductor into show business here. Few of those who have followed in his wake will be regarded as great musicians, but then, they have not yet achieved his longevity either.

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Abstract

Two poems by Peter Redgrove

Round Water

(The jellyfish in its medusoid or sexually adult form spends its time bouncing up and down slowly in the surface waters by means of a pulsation in the swimming-bell.)

I.
There is the salt water out of which the stars rise,
It is the pool of the sun and the pool of the moon

In which they wash themselves.

The moon descends into its pool becoming its subsequent selves.

II.
He hugs and sells the water
In which the faces of the dead are washed
To make them shine as clean as stars

In the city marked out according to the animals
In the night sky: the great planner draws them
Out of the harbour which is smooth and black.
The Sagittary
And Eridanus Plaza (this is by the river),
Beta Cygni Ltd. (Jewellers),
Milk Dipper House (Min of Ag and Fish),
Hotel Aquila,
The Altar Bespoke Tailor Complex, the Lura Playhouse,
And Sunhouse, the official broadcasting station.

III.
We watch Osiris step from the water in the rising sun
A thin shaving of gold that makes the birds cry out.
Starfolk washing there? Who are the starfolk caught there?
Say the blue cloudy parasol and the red parasol.
The yellow umbrella that is a sea-drinking opol
Busy as the ocean's throat wearing a necklace,
The round fish, the breeding moonstone,

The shiny jelly-flower which is a salt brain
Of many wet avenues and chambers,
And a simple gorgon beating out the right rhythm,
Sensate mandala, pulsing umbrella
That sinks down into the depths, beats up, slips down,
Whose ponds are black pits of a glass gooseberry
Which is a parasol that squeezes shut, then opens,

In the perfectly round river of correct rhythm,
The jellyflower bumping its shell in meditation
The model of quiet living, the model of the correct.
At last perfected to jelly and snail.
Seamless of the perfect, rounded gestures
That cease on the gritty shore like sizzling hooftracks,

But within the sea are the sea's model of itself,
Beating the rhythms, model of the rhythms.

Look! the filmy round mother is in the sky,
The sea's tree is blossoming with jelly-flowers
Shedding their sexual powders,
Round water, healing water that stings,
Medusa-fish, model for the sky,
The moon's changes, and the circular wetlook city.

Eccentricity

I.
A local yellow marmalade made with pollen.
Our neighbour steeps brass sheets upstream
Charging the river with electricity,
Holds himself responsible for the town's prosperity,
Runs for mayor. The farmer's boy runs in
Shaking and white, having seen on the Green
Two newly-dead souls of cricketers practising
As stiff and white as if they had just been starched.
Bearing a child here makes you honorary Cornish,
But to whom do you apply for eccentricity?

II.
For example, here is a man who wears a wine-coloured
Body-suit of tough leather fluted with
White nails and teeth and swagging paimon.
The warmth and texture of Pigs. Is not such
A man death? Who could ever credit this
Middle-aged? If you ripped
This false suit off would not life step out of it?

III.
One applies for eccentricity to the Brewery.
I have seen many tribal, ceremonial masks, the best
A mask with moving parts: the face of a bird;
Twist a nail: the snout of a snake.
Open two more wood doors and we face
The mask of a man-bull, who is cattle
And rippling serpent, and bird
Wet from the egg all at once, blowing his flutes
With bull-breath, bird-beak, snake eyes.

I have a mask composed of earthenware, or glass,
A great snout of a pig of a pint of foaming beer.
Take that away, and what have you?
Nothing at all perhaps, except the same again, please.

Malvern Memorials

I Loving Memory

For Teresa Stratas

The fosses where Caractacus fought Rome
blend with grey bracken and become a blur
above the Swedish Nightingale's last home,
Somehow my need for you makes me seek her.

The Malverns darken as the dusk seeps in.
The rowan berries' bright red glaze grows dull.
The harvest moon's scraped silver and bruised tin
is only one night off from being full.

Death keeps all hours, but graveyards close at nights.
I hurry past the Malvern Hospital
where a nurse goes round small wards and puts on lights
and someone there's lost night begins to fall.

"The oldest rocks this earth can boast", these hills
packed with extinction make me burn for you.

I ask two women leaving with dead daffodils:
Where's Jenny Lind's grave, please? They both say: Who?

II Looking Up

For Philip, Terry, and Will Sharpe
and the bicentenary of the birth of
Peter Mark Roget (1779-1869).

All day till it grows dark I sit and stare
over Herefordshire hills and into Wales.
Reflections of red coals thrown on the air
blossom to brightness as the daylight fails.

An uncharred cherry flaunts a May of flames.
Like chaffinches and robins tongues of fire
flit with the burden of Creation's names
but find no new apostles to inspire.

Bar a farmhouse TV aerial or two,
the odd red bus, the red Post Office van,
this must have been exactly Roget's view,
good Dr Roget, the Thesaurus man.

Roget died here, but 90 when he died
of natural causes twice as old as me.

Of his six synonyms for suicide
I set myself alight with safe suttee.

Tony Harrison

From The Wave Hennets

I

In the summer waves, bathers: child, water-winged;
boy with a snorkel, erect, stiff from his head;
swim-capped grandmother, rubber-flowered; blue-ringed
toddlers, not out of his depth; standing father
with his eyes on the distance; with legs outspread,
yielding to rise and fall, smooth girl; and, rather
far, the boldest, with arms claiming speed and space,
or, on wallowing lilo, the most relaxed;
a fat woman in tight costume, given grace
urging and urged; tall young man walking in, taxed
by the surf and the shingle crashing, clogging.
All are rising and falling, swaying, rocking.

II

As you're reading these lines, do you notice the
rhythm? It's difficult really with your mind
on the meaning of words, easy to miss the
beat of the sound. Can you split your attention
now, observing with half of it what's behind
all that you read, even this very question?
And the beat isn't regular—there are breaks,
jumps, interruptions, that supposedly match
the surprises in sense, and they're clever fakes
hiding themselves under themselves. You can't catch
them at work. It's a trick, though, you must forgive:
it is not very different from how you live.

Edmond Leo Wright

A hennet is a 12-line hendecasyllabic verse rhyming abcbadedeff, of which
the Wave Hennets are usually anonymous. Mr Wright first used it in his
collection *The Wave Hennets* (1976).

Letters from Elizabeth Bishop

By Anne Stevenson

Since her death in the autumn of 1960, Elizabeth Bishop has at least received some of the honour she deserves. In 1962, however, when Donald Hall suggested that I divert my admiration of her poetry into a little book for Twayne's "United States Authors Series", her poems had been praised and ignored. Although America had showered her with prizes, including the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1956, she was principally admired by a circle of artists who were also her friends: Marianne Moore, Pablo Neruda, Robert Lowell, Randall Jarrell, Richard Wilbur. In England, in the 1960s at least, the only poet I knew who took her work seriously was the late G. S. Fraser. If she is "discovered" now, and taken up (as Edward Thomas was) by a generation of poets young enough to be her grandchildren, the irony will be a familiar one.

Elizabeth Bishop would have been the first to smile. For, like her poems, Elizabeth was both sure of her art (some thought her arrogant) and self-effacing. Intolerant of pretension, unapproachable by the pompous, she was fond of amusing, unassuming people, and unswayed by literary jealousy. She had spent much of her childhood in a tiny village in Nova Scotia, and like Wordsworth, or Edwin Muir, had lived so intensely during that period that adulthood scarcely claimed the force of the experience. (For perhaps the best story of childhood ever written, look up "In The Village" in her third collection of poems, *Questions of Travel*.) She viewed her life, I think, as a pursuit—not at childhood, for her own was in many ways unhappy, but of a clarity and truth of experience which she glimpsed from time to time during her travels (or dreams) and out of which she drew her extraordinary poems.

Miss Bishop was living in Brazil, and I in Watertown, just outside Cambridge, Massachusetts, when I wrote to Marianne Moore, whom I had met at Harvard, to ask if she thought I might write to Elizabeth Bishop in connection with my book. I could find little in Widener Library other than a cursory note in *Who's Who*. Where, I wondered, were the poems and the marvellous stories, Elizabeth Bishop had published very little. Marianne Moore wrote back in her inimitable fashion:

Yes, I think you might write to Elizabeth Bishop, enclosing certain questions—not to answer or not as she thinks best. I hope she is not dying a slow death of inquiries concerning her life and work. . . . She now lives in Brazil, as you probably know, with Louis Zukorff. . . . You might enquire if she would tell you a little about her study—that I heard with interest (excitement) of her lectern; carved Spanish I think. . . . She seems happy. . . . Is very fond of animals—had a toucan for a while. . . . I hope she has made the little Negro baby (of their cook?) seem very real to me. . . . Please pardon my half-answering you. One should not know where to stop if one could help a friend—Elizabeth or I default. Please help me, ignore me as much as you can. . . . I am glad you are writing the book (perhaps it can't all be inferred).

With this poem of a letter to Zukorff, Elizabeth Bishop was at together real, with her Spanish lectern and her toucan. I wrote cautiously to Petrópolis. But before my letter reached Brazil, a letter typed on the thinnest of yellow paper arrived in Watertown: "Dear Mrs Stevenson", it began. (Properly it was Miss Stevenson, of course.) I had recently been married, perhaps. . . . though I don't think "Ms" had been invented in 1963. In any case, the letter continued:

I have recently received a letter from Marianne Moore in which she says that you would like some information about me for the "Twayne Publishers Series". I can't seem to remember what it is, although I probably know—will you tell me something about it? She quotes you to the effect that I "despise professionalized criticism". But I don't think I do. I wonder where that idea came from? (Unless "professional" means something very different from what it does in my case. . . .) I am a writer, quick to blush for that inappropriate "professionalized" (I had read in John Ciardi's *Mid-Century American Poets* Elizabeth's curt dismissal of talking "the very life out of poetry"). I wrote back to apologize and to thank her. From embarrassment on my part and kindness on hers, a correspondence kindled between us which began simply as an exchange of information (I asked her questions and sent her chapters of the book as I progressed; she answered my questions and commented intelligently on my chapters, but which continued long after the book was completed and published—and became, at least to me, in a time chaotic with uncertainty, a touchstone of all that was clean, ing and right in poetry, and indeed in life.

To my sorrow, most of the letters Elizabeth Bishop wrote to me during the 1960s (all of them badly typed on thin yellow paper) disappeared from my files in Glasgow when I moved to Dundee in 1974. At the advice of Philip Holbourn, to whom I had shown the letters, I had made xeroxes of the correspondence, and these xeroxes I still possess. Upon reading of Elizabeth's death, I released them from their envelope. They were so alive, still, that they all but trembled.

Much that Elizabeth said in these letters was in prompt criticism—sharp comment on writing and the nature of art—of a kind that I do not believe she would otherwise have committed to paper. Her imagination was so intensely visual that she felt any logical explanation of what she wrote to be a corruption of the thing itself. She had the clearest mind I have ever known. She was perfectly aware of what was right and wrong (for her) in poetry. Ruthlessly critical of herself—less so of other poets—she used to pin lines from unfinished poems on the walls of her study so as to gaze at them (or have them gaze at her) every time she sat down to write. Often she wrote poems over a matter of months, sometimes years, stitching and unstitching as Yeats had advised, until she had got the natural "flowing" effect she desired.

"I have always wanted to write some really 'popular' songs", she wrote, early on in the correspondence, not "easy" songs. One thing I like very much in Brazil is the popular music. . . . often superb spontaneous folk-music, and I want very much to write a piece about them."

Which did not mean, of course, that Elizabeth was in the smallest way unsophisticated. An expert on contemporary art and architecture (she and Louis had designed their own house), she was an informed collector of paintings, a musician who had studied the harpsichord, briefly, with Ralph Kirkpatrick—a rarest of talents, a feeling for the beautiful and an equally ferocious instinct for detecting the phoney. The letters abound in references to her enthusiasms.

You are right about my admiring Klee very much—but as it happens, "The Monument" was written more under the influence of a set of *Frottages* by Max Ernst I used to own. I am passionately fond of painting; in fact I'd much rather talk about painting than poetry, as a rule. I am equally fond of music—although I'm rather behind with that, living in Brazil. Next time round I'd like to be a painter—or a composer—or a doctor (I seriously considered studying medicine for several years and still wish I had. . . .)

And in a subsequent letter: You mention Ernst again. Oh dear—I wish I'd never mentioned him at all, because I think he's usually a dreadful painter. . . . I like I. M. of course, and Schwitters (have one here that has to be watched for termites and mildew constantly). . . . Some Sauters, for example, one smallish quiet grey & blue one of Bonheur, with posts sticking up out of the beach—at the Museum of Modern Arts in N.Y.—I'd give anything to have painted that I.

Bearing in mind that Elizabeth usually wrote in haste, scarcely waiting to get one idea into type before her mind leapt on to the next one, the tone of her letters is surprising but never tedious, quick to

detect innuendo, ready always to sympathize, she was a proud woman to whom dignity and manners mattered. At the same time, she was ready at all times to give herself over to imagination. Living as she did, a self-exiled puritan, incarcerated by her own contradictory desires in an elegant house in the midst of an undemocratic, unsettled, terrifying, beautiful country (never forgetting the jungle) she was precisely in the right position to balance imagination with observation at the slow writing pace she found necessary for the creation of poems.

There is no "split". Dreams, works of art (some), glimpses of the always-more-successful surrealism of everyday life, unexpected moments of empathy (is it?) catch a peripheral vision of whatever case being built up out of his endless, heroic observations, almost unconscious or automatic—and then comes a sudden relaxation, a forgetful phrase, and one feels the strangeness of his undertaking, sees the lonely young man, his eyes fixed on facts and minute details, sliding giddily off into the unknown. What one seems to want in art, in experiencing it, is the same thing that is necessary for its creation, a self-forgetful, perfectly useless concentration. (In this sense it is always "escape" don't you think?)

After reading that, could one really believe that there is a split between the scientist's and the writer's vision of things? And how many pages of conventional criticism are usually required to say a quarter of what Elizabeth Bishop says in a paragraph?

Letters, of course, have the advantage over articles or essays, since the writer is not required to prove a thesis, or demonstrate a theory. Perhaps that is why I find these letters from Elizabeth Bishop so full of truth. Only a supreme artist could have written, unself-consciously, so much truth about herself, and yet left so much to be "inferred"—as Marianne Moore

put it. In the absence of a Coleridge *Letters*, I hope Miss Bishop will, in spirit, condone the printing of some random passages—which are not, of course, substitutes for any of the poems, but which may help people to read the poems with a sense of her personality behind them.

There isn't any particular logic to when and where the poems were written. The first five in the book [*Poems*, Houghton Mifflin, 1955] were written in New York in 1934. "Large Bad Picture" was written later in Key West. (Memory poems are apt to pop up from time to time no matter where one happens to be. I find—I mean childhood memory poems.) "Man-Moth" is another very early one, and "Country to City", the Miracle sestina, "Love Lies Sleeping", later New York ones, after my first winter in Paris. . . . Paris 7AM! I did write in Paris, "Quai d'Orléans", too, but the second stay there—in between comes "Florida"—and "Cirque d'Ivoire" was written during a later stay on Cape Cod. . . . "Varick Street" I had a garret on King Street in N.Y. for a good many years—the buildings are torn down now—and in warm weather it was very noisy. I use dream-material whenever I am lucky enough to have any and this particular poem is almost all dream—just re-arranged a bit—so was "Rain Towards Morning"—and most of the last stanza of "Anaphora". The last few lines of the first stanza of "At the Fishhouses" were also a dream, as James would say, in a dream. . . . I do listen to the hi fi a lot. ("Roosters", I remember, I got rather stuck with, and a recording of Kirkpatrick—I took a few lessons with him long ago—of Scaratti got me going in a particular rhythm.)

At fifteen I loved Whitman; at sixteen someone gave me the book of Hopkins that had just been reissued. I never really liked Emily Dickinson much, except a few nature poems, until that complete edition came out a few years ago and I read it all more carefully. I still hate the Oh-the-pain-of-all poems, but I admire many others, mostly phrases more than whole poems. I particularly admire her having dared to do it all alone—a bit like Hopkins in that (I have a poem about them, comparing them to two self-caged birds, but it is unfinished). This is sad—but I don't like the humourless Martha-Graham kind of person who does like Emily Dickinson. In fact I think snobbery governs a great deal of my taste, have been very lucky in having had . . . some witty friends—and I mean real wit, quickness, wild fancies, remarks that make one cry with laughing. . . . Marianne was very funny—Cummins, too. . . . Perhaps I need such people to cheer me up. They are usually stoical, unselfish, physically courageous.

Pauline Hemingway . . . sent my first book to Ernest in Cuba. He wrote her he liked it, and referring to "The Fish": "I wish I knew as much about it as she does." Allowing for exaggeration to please his ex-wife—that remark has really meant more to me than any praise in the quarters. I knew that underneath Mr H and I were really a lot alike. He said horribly, that critics in N.Y. were like "angleworms in a bottle". Perhaps Gibson put it better: "A cloud of critics, of compilers, of commentators, darkened the face of learning, and the decline of genius was soon followed by the corruption of taste."

You mention Williams. I may have been influenced by him. I've read him, of course, and usually liked his flatter impressionistic poems best, not when he's trying to be profound. . . . But that diffuseness is exhausting (like Pound's). This is not exact at all—but I feel that both he & Pound, and their followers, would be vastly improved if one could lean on a sense of "system" in their work somehow. . . . At least in how of W. I really want to go off and read Housman or a hymn by Cowper. . . . Wallace Stevens was more of an influence. I think. At college I knew *Harmonium* almost by heart. . . . But I got tired of him and now find him romantic and thin—but very cheering, because in spite of "the revised theories"

to the doll's Afghan in different coloured squares, your griddomother who "knitted things for soldiers"

taught you to do, with little sermons, "and I've never knitted since."

Seamus Heaney

John Co. 116

(very romantic) he did have such a wonderful time with all these words, and found a superior way of amusing himself.

Because of my era, sex, situation, education I have written, so far, what I feel is a rather "precious" kind of poetry, although I am very much opposed to the precious. Our wishes things were different, that one could begin all over again. One almost envies those Russian poets a bit—who feel they are so important, and perhaps are. At least the party seems afraid of them, whereas I doubt that any American poet (except poor wretched Pound) ever bothered our government much... one probably shouldn't worry too much about one's position, and certainly never about being "contemporary".

My outlook is pessimistic. I think we are still barbarians, barbarians who commit hundreds of atrocities and crimes every day of our lives, as just possibly future ages may be able to see. But I think we should be gay in spite of it, sometimes even giddy—to make life endurable and to keep ourselves "now, tender, quick".

I could go on and on, quoting from these letters, but no amount of space in a newspaper could do

justice to them. The first letters were, perhaps, the most revealing, but as our curious friendship developed (we met only three or four times, in one Cambridge or another) they became more relaxed and a great deal more comical. In 1958 or 1959, after the death of her friend Lota de Macedo Soares, Elizabeth Bishop left Brazil and returned to the United States, first to San Francisco and then to Boston. She was, I know, terribly unhappy, and I heard nothing from her. After she was established at Harvard, things improved and she wrote me cheerfully, sending poems which later appeared in *Geography III*. Then, with the death of Robert Lowell last year, life blackened. I knew I should have written to her then, but finally didn't. The news of her own death made me wish desperately that I had. I don't think she ever knew what a fine poet she was—for me, finer than Lowell, though of course more limited. I'm sure she was unaware of how much she changed the life (and writing) of her first biographer. The art of losing may not be hard to master, but the loss of Elizabeth Bishop has deprived poetry of a great artist, and left all of us who loved her the poorer for knowing that she is no longer enriching the world with her perceptions.



"Diaghilev watching a Rehearsal" (above right), by Picasso, drawn in Rome in 1917 when Picasso was working in Rome with Cocteau, Satie, and Massine on *Parade*, and given by him to Clive Bell in 1958. This, together with the costume design by Pavel Tchelitchew reproduced on the cover, and Tchelitchew's "Portrait of Tilly Losch" (above left), is one of the lots in a sale of "Ballet and Theatre Material, including Costume and Décor Designs, Bronzes, Portraits and Books" at Sotheby's, New Bond Street, London, on Thursday, March 13. Also included are many works by Leon Bakst, and others by Massine, Derain, Cocteau, and Léger. The catalogue gives a brief sketch of the career of Tilly Losch, from whose collection (together with those of Leonid Massine and Ram Gopal) many of the items in the sale are derived: "born in Vienna at the beginning of the century, she danced professionally from the age of six, first with the Vienna State Ballet, then in Salzburg under Max Reinhardt, with whom she had many successes: notably in A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Miracle. In the thirties her greatest triumph was her creation of the dancing Anna to Lotte Lenya's singing Anna in Berthold Brecht's The Seven Deadly Sins. In London she performed with C. B. Cochrane and Noël Coward, in New York with Fred Astaire. Her first husband was the financier and collector Edward James who created Les Ballets de 1933. Later she married the Earl of Carnarvon. Her closest friends included the Sitwells, Cecil Beaton and Tchelitchew."

The invaders' signature

By James
Graham-Campbell

NICHOLAS A. BAILEY:
Viking Age Sculpture in Northern
England
288pp. Collins. £10.95
0 00 216228 8

Over the next few years a series of volumes will appear, under the general editorship of Rosemary Cramp, to form the British Academy's *Corpus of the Pre-Norman Sculpture of England*. The publication of this complete catalogue will provide the subject with the first, lasting one of its kind, but meanwhile one of its main contributors, Richard Bailey, has provided the general reader with a most absorbing introduction (the first in a new series of archaeological books, from Collins) to the Viking-age sculpture of northern England. This area and period in the history of English sculpture are of particular interest not because of the quality of the carvings, for most of them are pretty poor (and were originally painted), but because the hundreds of introduced fragments form the most important body of archaeological evidence for the relationship between Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians.

The Vikings who arrived in Britain and Ireland in the ninth and tenth centuries were unfamiliar with stone sculpture, but found themselves in countries with long-established traditions of carving stone crosses and cross-slabs. The material presented in this book demonstrates how enthusiastically the Scandinavian settlers in northern England took up stone sculpture, and, in divorcing it from its Anglo-Saxon context, gave it a vigorous new lease of life. Much of their sculpture drew heavily on the Anglo-Saxon tradition, but Norse and Gaelic-Norse settlers entering from the north-west introduced ideas from Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man. It was their area of settlement, from Cumbria to North Yorkshire, that saw the development in the tenth century of the one of the most striking forms of monumental sculpture, the hogback. As their name suggests, hogbacks are massive stones with curved ridges, but they are also bow-sided in imitation of Scandinavian buildings of the period. Some even have clear indications of shields on their roofs. They are a remarkable phenomenon, worthy of more space than Dr Bailey has allowed them, but then they form the special subject of his *Corpus* colleague, James Lang.

Bailey starts from first principles. The nature of the evidence is established, its distribution discussed, its historical background sketched in. Only then are we invited to join him in a more detailed examination of a selection of the late ninth to eleventh-century carvings reproduced during the period the Scandinavian settlement and its

aftermath in northern England. The problems are laid out clearly and the difficulties faced ("Chronological vagueness is an occupational disease of the student of Viking-age sculpture"), before the reader is initiated into the iconographic problems presented by much of the material. Here is layman and his flying machine (in Leeds, the parish church and the fishing for the world-serpent with an ox-head for his bait (in Gosforth church, Cumbria). Such scenes drawn from Scandinavian mythology were used alongside Christian scenes of which the Crucifixion is the commonest, but there are others of great interest, from the death of Isidore (Wimlic, Cheshire) to Doomsday (Lindisfarne Priory Museum). The massive cross at the end of the main text, the cross of the man in which the symbols of native Anglian and incoming Scandinavian were fused together. But Bailey does not omit to introduce a proper note of scepticism into many of the identifications and interpretations that he offers, so that the reader may decide for himself when speculation is becoming unwarranted.

Regional groupings of the sculptures are established from the shapes of the monuments and their ornamental motifs, and the results are used as a basis for historical inferences. We are warned of how inferences have been misused by historians from time to time, but are left in no doubt that its potential as a source of knowledge still remains to be properly tapped. Here modesty may be the way ahead, but modesty has prevented the author from taking credit for the exciting new development that is outlined by him in a final chapter on "The Sculptor at Work".

By means of superimposing rubrics, Bailey has recently discovered that most of his Viking-age sculptures made use of templates or stencils to lay out the form of the cross-heads, and the dynamics of the shafts. Such templates, which may have been of metal, wood or most probably leather, must in some cases have carried a great deal of detail, and a minimum level of competence on the part of the sculptor. Once it is established that the same templates have been used at different sites it becomes possible to build up a picture of the products of a local workshop or atelier, or even to establish the contemporary of template-linked works. Bailey's research in this most promising field is at an early stage, but its potential is already apparent.

The book is completed by a useful series of maps, a gazetteer of sites to visit, and a bibliography to lead the reader on to take up the study of the sculpture for himself, armed as he will be with this skillful guide to the evidence, its nature and potential, and the controversies that surround aspects of its interpretation.

Disturbingly funny

By Gamini Salgado

NICHOLAS BROOKE:
Horrid Laughter in Jacobean
Tragedy
135pp. Open Books. £6.95.
0 7291 0101 0

"The point about tragedy," Harold Pinter once said, "is that it is no longer funny. It is funny, and then it becomes no longer funny." Nicholas Brooke would agree, though he would probably want to amend the statement on Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedy. He is concerned with certain tragedies which are unfunny and funny together. Specifically he examines six of the best-known Jacobean tragedies from the standpoint that certain moments of comedy, grotesque and otherwise, which they contain are not the result of ineptitude, absent-mindedness or a reckless voracity.

Professor Brooke begins his inquiry on a sound empirical basis, from his experiences both as a university teacher and as a playwright. What he gave a series of lectures entitled "Jacobean Tragedy" students, accustomed to Aristotelian clarity, either denied or deplored the presence of laughter in the plays. When he discussed the same plays under the rubric of "Horrid Laughter" the students, rejected the tragic context. Similarly, theatre audiences, as he notes, invariably laugh at certain points in the performance of these plays, yet their laughter is of an uncomfortable, embarrassed kind.

He goes on to argue the case for a response to these plays which would recognize the pain, violence and tragic foreboding in them without ignoring or minimizing their comic or grotesque elements. The book begins with a brief discussion of Freud's views on jokes and the unconscious, and Brooke's on laughter. Professor Brooke rightly judges that the former is not very central to the study of laughter and the latter, emphasizing laughter as a social corrective to social abnormality, leaves the case to be argued as it will be with this skillful guide to the evidence, its nature and potential, and the controversies that surround aspects of its interpretation.

Jacobean tragedy. They include the laughter that generates chaos, the brutal laughter of sadism rampant, and the sardonic laughter in which hysteria is a felt presence. Laughter and tears may appear to be opposites and each to be physiologically homogeneous. Both appearances are deceptive and we need language to interpret them and distinguish between their various kinds, often in life and always in drama.

The analysis of the six plays which follows is nearly always subtle, stimulating or persuasive or all three. Professor Brooke sees "horrid laughter" as an essentially Jacobean rather than an Elizabethan phenomenon, though its origin is in the earlier phase—a line running from Kyd, Marlowe and Marston, through Tournier, Middleton and Webster and finally peering out with Ford's *The Trifling* and *The Lover's Melancholy*. He considers Shakespearean tragedy, with the exception of *Titus Andronicus*, to stand apart from this development, not because comic or grotesque effects are absent from Shakespearean tragedy—Gloucester's blinding in *Le Lear*, the grave-diggers in *Hamlet*, the Porter scene in *Macbeth*—but because at the end of Shakespearean tragedy only the single tragic note is struck whereas in the others the final harmony is always a mixed one. This places on the endings of the plays a crucial burden in defining their nature and effect. I am not convinced that it is a weight which some of them can bear. The author himself seems inconsistent in his application of the point, because while Shakespeare is excluded because "I have never heard of laughter at the end of *Le Lear*", *Dr Faustus* seems to count not because of a "mixed" ending but because of the "repeated shifts into will: comedy" that occur throughout.

The author's approach is most revealing in his discussion of *The White Devil* and *The Tiffling*. *White Devil*, though there are many fine incidental comments on all the plays, makes good critical use of the perception that the element of force in Flaminio's bogus death is counterpointed by a close rhetorical affinity between the pretended and actual death, though I feel it is oversteering the case to say that Flaminio's death is "essentially" a parody. The account of how the play's "theatrical moment of Giovanni's death" at the end of *Tiffling* with his sister's heart impaled

on his dagger's point affects us superbly responsive to the theatrical and linguistic impact of a scene of horrors for reader and direct alike.

Elsewhere doubts arise. I argue that the scenes between Claudio and Gratiana in *The Revenger's Tragedy* "are not in an ordinary sense funny at all: it is the sharp perceptions they express over-cabulate and evade, and I cannot see that the intensity of one's being, Lawrence was openly subjectivist. 'The touchstone is emotion, not reason', he declared in 1939 in his review of *Walden*. "We judge a work of art by its effect on our sincere and vital emotion, and nothing else." Arguments about style and form he called "critical twiddle-twiddle". The truth is that anyone who believes literary judgments to be objective, as I do, has always worked in an atmosphere where that view is rare to the point of standing in grave danger of being thought imbecile or, at best, ironic. This is just a fact of the past twenty years, it has been so for as long as any living person can recall. And it affects more than literature. "Comment is free, but facts are sacred", C. P. Scott announced in 1926—aware, apparently, that most facts are contested or simply unknown, and many opinions of value both agreed and certain. The notion that facts are what men agree on, and judgments where they differ, is so widespread an illusion as to be nearly universal in places where literature is studied and taught, and far beyond them.

That then should disagree about literary values is no reason for thinking them subjective, since they also disagree about such highly objective questions as the exact population of India or the physical composition of a distant star. A prominent element in this debate is an assumption that in its debate about the form of literature, and being able to give an account of it, understandingly reluctant as the

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viewpoint

GEORGE WATSON

"The dislodgement of 'evaluation' has been effected with remarkably little fuss", writes John Carey (*Viewpoint*, February 22) in a bold phrase which echoes a dismissal of Milton many years ago; he adds that almost no one but me now believes in the objectivity of literary judgments. Milton has survived, and so (I believe) will objectivity. It is literary subjectivism that needs to be dislodged, though it may take more than a little fuss to do it. That is because, as Professor Carey rightly remarks, it now largely possesses the field.

Subjectivism is a nonsense believed in by highly intelligent people. That is what is interesting about it. It is like believing in Stalin's Russia, or monetarism, or structuralism, or the obnoxious as a road to social reform. One might almost say you would have to be intelligent to believe in anything so silly, which would be about right, though some would prefer to substitute "highly educated" for "intelligent". We are now in an area which an American has sagely called Educated Incompetence (EI), meaning that any ordinary person can see that it is not so. I believe we should be more nervous about EI than we are. If education trains people to deny the obvious and respect nothing but paradox, then its existence is gravely at risk. It is being paid for, after all, by people who can see what is obvious and sometimes nothing but that, and who will entertain paradoxes only after a good dinner, if at all. Sobering to reflect how parasitic any educational system must be on the readiness of a free people to pay for it.

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I, for one we are seldom found in laboratories. But if we were, would we never hear one scientist say to another, "The best thing to do now in this experiment would be to..." or "The most important thing you have discovered is..."? I do not understand how any intellectual inquiry, in or out of a laboratory, could be conducted without assertions of this kind. They would not be mere conversational decorations, which is more, but essential to the act of discovery. And they are value-judgments.

Again, we are often assured by men of letters that scientists move from one certain proposition to another. Carey, like Lawrence, thinks the hope of making criticism more scientific "misconceived from the start". But he uses "scientific" as a synonym for truth, which it is not. Many scientific assertions are untrue. Whenever two scientists disagree, which is often, at least one of them is asserting something which is untrue. Such utterances, what is more, have often been believed by scientists for decades and even centuries. If literary critics disagree among themselves and make mistakes, as they assuredly do, they are behaving all the more like scientists for that. Perhaps the best, it is regrettable that English distinguishes itself from other great European languages in reserving the word "science" at least in recent usage, to the study of physical nature. If once meant knowledge, and knowledge advanced by getting things wrong as well as right.

"Supposing we were to ask someone... what it is that makes the correct response correct", Carey asks, and he concludes unhesitatingly that the only adequate reply could be that the correct response is true. Such utterances, what is more, have often been believed by scientists for decades and even centuries. If literary critics disagree among themselves and make mistakes, as they assuredly do, they are behaving all the more like scientists for that. Perhaps the best, it is regrettable that English distinguishes itself from other great European languages in reserving the word "science" at least in recent usage, to the study of physical nature. If once meant knowledge, and knowledge advanced by getting things wrong as well as right.

But it might, after all, be both true and sufficient as an answer, outside an exam-room. You do not have to be able to enunciate the laws of physics in order to ride a bike, and thinking too precisely about them might even make you fall off. The taste of fresh-picked asparagus is not one I can adequately describe, though it is one I can recommend, and not only to myself. I am able to produce the grammatical rules which govern one or two foreign languages better than I can those which govern English—not because I know English less well, but because I know it so well that I do not have to be able to produce its rules. In other words, there is a difference between knowing something and being able to give an account of it, understandingly reluctant as the

Only compare

GLEN CAVALIERO:
A Reading of E. M. Forster
187pp. Macmillan. £10
0 353 23752 2

For one hard fact remains. They did neglect a personal appeal. The woman, who had died did say to them, "Do this" and they answered, "We will not". "The whole chapter", Glen Cavaliero remarks in this celebrated book, "is a comparison of the second one of *Sense and Sensibility*, more Forsterian of Jane Austen's novels." Moreover, the Schlegel sisters offer much the same contrast as the Dashwoods and the Eltons in *Emma*. But the main purpose of Mr Cavaliero's book is to examine "the mythological of his private life which makes Forster as a novelist so intimate and yet portentous"; the manner in which he used the domestic background which threatened him as a man to establish himself as an artist. The task, not an easy one, is perceptively and persuasively carried out.

J. I. M. Stewart

academic mind may be to admit this; and there can even be a sense in which being able to give an account, as in the case of grammatical rules, is evidence not of knowledge but of relative ignorance. We can now return to God. Any omniscient being is likely to think Shakespeare a great poet, but the terms in which he explained why would be limited by the competence of those he was addressing. In this respect God would be like any other critic, and his explanatory act depends on competence that is shared, or is at least shareable, between teacher and learner. The most obvious limitation here is a given language, since even English is a limited vehicle. (Think how little it can tell of the intricacy of asparagus.) Another limitation is the range of comparison. To call Shakespeare the greatest of English poets, for example, is to claim a knowledge of his competitors. It does not seem to me godlike, in the arrogant sense, for an experienced critic to claim to know more about literature than other people, any more than for a botanist to claim to know more about plants. He had better.

It is commonplace, though unfortunate, for debates about evaluation to descend rapidly into parody about criteria. "We can be sure of no particular aspect of literature which might serve as a criterion of value", as Carey puts it. I wonder why we should seek to isolate anything of the sort. A criterion here presumably means a stateable standard, not a value. If it were unstable, then it would be no objection to say that one could not state it. I should be disposed to say that the literary criterion is unstable, were it not that I find it hard to believe that it is there to be stated. It is not what we are failing, through our own obtuseness or the limits of language, to say what it is. It is rather that there is no "it" to be said.

What sufficient grounds, after all, have we ever been offered to suppose that judgments invariably require criteria? I am not aware that the assumption that they do is widely made in academe, and not only in schools of literature. But then it is a prime instance of EI, which has few better places to flourish than here. Any ordinary man, and for that matter any academic, knows that he can tell a good dinner from a bad one, and if you were to suggest that he cannot do so until he has produced his gastronomic criteria, he would know that you were talking hosh. And he would be right. The crucial distinction between knowing what something is, on the one hand, and being able to give an account of it on the other, is nowhere clearer than in matters which concern the daily business of living, loving, tasting and quaffing. No man ever refused a second glass of wine, surely, because he could not accurately for the wine's excellence in words.

In a wintry season for literary education, we shall need to keep faith in the knowledge which only literature can give, and no less in our capacity to explain that knowledge or point to what cannot be explained. But the dangers of sub-

jectivism are far wider than the collapse of our literary schools. They include, as Carey rightly sees, our sense of one another as fellow human beings. If value-judgments can only tell us about the people making the judgments", he concludes, then the role which starts with that dogma could not easily stop with the study of literature. "That's but a trifle here..."

Imagine, if you can, a world in which judgments of value were never regarded as performing any other function than that of informing about those who make them. The scientist, then, advised by his colleague about the best experimental step to take, would regard that advice exclusively as evidence about his colleague and in no way informative about the experiment itself. A Prime Minister, faced with a draft budget, would see it entirely as indicative of the character of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his advisers; and a pilot, told how best to land at London Airport and rightly sensing this to be a value-judgment, would devote his mind entirely to speculating about the inferior life of air-controllers at Heathrow.

The truth is that we can all see a true one.

A value-judgment, in itself: and a true one.

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commentary

The resistible riddle of Ezra Fricker

By John Sutherland

The Loud Boy's Life
Warehouse

Howard Barker's *The Loud Boy's Life* opened at the Warehouse to a frigid reception from first-night audience and critics. The play is an updated and anglicized version of *Arioso* by Ezra Fricker, a parliamentary demagogue ("loud boy") whose rise is less resisted than inhibited by his own idiosyncrasy of the British constitution. Passed over by the cabal which determines the new Tory leadership in 1980 (the woman Prime Minister must go), Fricker declines to use the money that surrounds Westminster, claiming his name. "I don't want to be carried shoulder high by lorry drivers," he says, "it's not part of my world picture." Or as another character puts it, "he's mad—but he's constitutional."

In an opening scene closely reminiscent of Brecht, the English Junkers, gathered as a peculiarly obnoxious "Ancient Order of Savages" propose a putch to Fricker. "England," they tell him, "is a horse without a rider." One industrial savage laments "I am the last Englishman in thermos flasks," "who won the war?" asks a legal savage; a literary savage complains that he cannot get his novels published. Funds are collected, the plot is opened to a man of destiny. But Fricker, though he has a messianic sense of race and personal destiny, must catch the number forty-seven bus. He will have nothing to do with treason. Having waited for the constitutional process to appoint him, he is ousted by party hacks. He is driven into the political wilderness and a safe nonentity gains the premiership. (Presumably, though it's not made clear, he will crumble in the face of the imminent Communist takeover which has precipitated the leadership crisis.) Ezra is left at a

lunatic asylum fair, which he chose to open on this most important day of his life, throwing darts at a staff and missing the ace every time.

A "life" as its title proclaims it, Barker's play purports to give us the whole Fricker. An inset scene, for example, transports us to the brutal 1960s junketing of the Savages to 1948 and a picnic on Greenwich Park Hill gathered to watch the London docks burning under the blitz. Young Lieutenant Fricker is offered some casual sex by a married woman who intersperses her invitation ("do you want to fuck me?") with passionate lamentation for "my people—burning down there." The bloated capitalist throwing the party proposes "a toast to the death of England." The civil servant discloses a ministry estimate that Britain will capitulate in six months, and predicts that she transfer of power will be smooth and painless: Hitler will ride up Oxford Street and things will go on as usual. Amidst all this, Fricker is called. An annihilating angel in the shape of a German streamer drops in on the scene and Fricker declares "I feel chosen to lead my race."

Such scenes perplex, as indeed the whole play perplexes. *The Loud Boy's Life* is clearly "about" Enoch Powell (lest we miss the identification, Fricker is a connoisseur of Greek poetry). Powell/Fricker is an enigma: a loud boy who declines to be loud outside Parliament, a potential dictator who has no interest in street power. Whether Fricker is a Churchill or a Hitler *manqué* is left unclear. Throughout, Barker generates and elaborates a sustained sense of incomprehension at the political monster, the man who could be king but who, out of decency, eccentricity or sheer idiosyncrasy, will not be. The working classes want Fricker, the Queen wants Fricker, even the lunatics at the asylum want Fricker. But like Mr Goddard's god, Fricker neglects to come.

Rather than "explain" his central character, Barker chooses to weave suggestive images around him. Locked doors, for instance, abound in the play. The Ancient Order of

Peninsular cosmopolitanism

By Nigel Glendinning

The Golden Age of Spanish Art
Nottingham University

The Art Gallery of the University of Nottingham has a reputation for exhibitions. But even by its high standards the selection of paintings and drawings entitled "The Golden Age of Spanish Art," which is on view until March 29, is rather exceptional. Past owners speak well for the quality of these works. The small panel of "The Disabling of Christ" by El Greco once belonged to Dolencroix; Baron Vivant Denon, the Director of the Musée Napoléon, had one of the mythological drawings by Ribera in his private collection; Sir Edwin J. Poynter, a Victorian art collector, gave a brush for elegant curves and the inclines, once possessed the desirable "Sleeping Nymph" by the same artist; while Charles I was given for his delectation the "Dish of Apples" by the Spanish still-life specialist Juan Fernandez (El Labrador), in which yellow skin gleams in the middle of a decorative circle of thin twigs and fat green leaves. The exhibition, in contrast to the one with the same title held at the Royal Academy in 1976, is drawn entirely from British collections. It is modest in size, by comparison with the show at Burlington House, yet it gives a remarkably full idea of art and taste in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The relevant Habsburg monarchs are on parade, pulling increasingly long faces amid the encircling blazons of their black habits and changing the Spanish art of the period. In these pictures the careful detail that was felt to be characteristic of the sixteenth century gives way to the broader and more sensitive sweeps of the brush. Appropriately, Velázquez's *Carducho* is available in a "Self-portrait" to keep a sharp eye on developments. He is depicted at work on a book, presumably his *Diálogos de Pintura* of 1633, which struck a major blow at the status of the artist in Spain at the time. Carducho is

called "moral exhaustion." If *The Loud Boy's Life* expresses anything, it is this. England, it would seem, too tired to be ruled even by the loudest dictator (and perhaps the dictator himself is rather tired, a country rotten with history is going under for the last time).

On the night and in the theatre Barker's play fails. He has little to put with his audience, who probably don't know what he's going on about and don't much like his play. It was ominous when the opening speech containing the trigger word "knickers," "littles" and "crack" raised not a single gasp. Exchanges such as "He's a great shit off his knickers," fell woefully flat. Without audience response, second act ran five minutes faster than scheduled in the programme.

Barker is not to blame for the tired atmosphere which the Warehouse (the "daring" department of the RSC) engenders, or for the queasiness of the straight London theatre-going public. But he is responsible for the damaging effect of his play where political ideas are concerned. One would not be very innocent, or an American tourist, not to realize that Barker has Enoch Powell in view. In although Fricker is given to say about "Beveridge the alien white race and immigration are mentioned. Could any damage assemble the lorry drivers of the land around Westminster when playing that particular card? One final impression of the play is of a man who has pulled punches.

Liberal art, imitating Nature exempt from VAT, rather than craftsmen copying others and paying the alcabala tax on their profits.

Carducho is a useful reminder of the cosmopolitan nature of the Golden Age Spain. His elder brother, like other artists of Italian or Flemish origin, went to live and work in the peninsula and produced a range of ecclesiastical and secular patronage. The other brother, in Naples, is the best known of the Spanish-born artists working outside their native country. He is illustrated in the Nottingham exhibition. Ribera, who lived in Naples, is the best known of the Spanish-born artists working outside their native country. He is illustrated in the Nottingham exhibition. Ribera, who lived in Naples, is the best known of the Spanish-born artists working outside their native country. He is illustrated in the Nottingham exhibition.

Inevitably and rightly there is a large congregation of religious paintings and drawings. It is hard to see the "National" and "Agony in the Garden" and despite recent doubts about attribution to El Greco. The geometrical pattern of rocks, cones and triangles, reminiscent of Roger Fry of Cézanne when a painting was first acquired in the 1920s. The small "Disabling of Christ" is certainly signed by El Greco, is certainly a drawing of the "Immortal Conception" of great charm. Despite imitations in other media, there is room for comparison with the religious paintings of another across the main gallery are the sombre Decadent figures of Ribera's "Vision of Saint Simon," that once belonged to Richard Ford, upon the pink and blue canvas of José Antonio López's "Immaculate Conception" from the Bowes Museum. The Simon, like Christ in the "Disabling of Christ," holds the middle finger of his right hand together in a gesture of the period, and not that of a contrived. But if you do not fancy these enigmas, always turn to a splendid pair of ordinary people, a woman frowning at a young boy laughing.

commentary

A reversal of lost time

By Ian Revie

A Waste of Time
Glasgow Citizens'

Philip Prowse has a well established reputation as an original designer, and his set for this version of Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* (A Waste of Time—dialogue by Robert David MacDonald) has the simplicity and obviousness of a brilliant conception executed with ease. In front of the proscenium arch a huge golden picture frame has been constructed; a few feet behind there is another, set slightly off-centre and behind that another, also slightly off-centre. Finally a fourth frame, centred this time, completes the division of the acting area and both the spatial and

temporal dimensions of Marcel's life.

The backcloth, however, is also set in a huge golden frame and shows an image which changes for each of the three acts—abstract black and gold for the first; a picture of Odette as turn-of-the-century horizontale / oblique for the second, and an Elstir seascape for the third. Against this stands, off-centre, a small oblong painting hanging like an ornamental fire-screen on a tall easel, so that the immediate intelligence is not only of worlds within worlds but also of constantly shifting points of view, and of the artist's elaborate construction, which tries to hold movement within stillness.

The action of the play reverses Proust's chosen evolution and flows, or sometimes jerks, backwards from an ageing consumptive Marcel, who appears in the immediate foreground

(all the other sections of the stage being occupied) in conversation with Gilberte and her daughter, to a near-hysterical child, also centre foreground, finally consoled by a wordless mother whose only appearance this is. If the advantages of this are among—"the child is father of the man"—and justified by a programme quotation from Kierkegaard—"life is lived forwards, but it is understood backwards"—the disadvantages are inescapable. Not only does Steven Darnell, playing Marcel's childhood crisis as a tantrum with his back to the audience, bear an unavoidable resemblance to Proust's descending stairs, but many of Proust's encyclopaedias of the relationship between anticipation/imagination and reality, the obvious counterpart to memory, disappear. Indeed the direction of this production places so much accent on the voluntary memory and the reconstruction of life through art that the involuntary memory barely finds a place at all. There is no *madeleine*—merely a few moments where the position of a character within the receding dimensions of the stage suggests such last backwards to recollection of the past. And even these moments operate more powerfully as indicators of changes in the appearance and understanding of character, brought about by a shifting temporal perspective.

It would of course be impossible, even given the length of the play at three and a half hours, to put on the stage all that is in the novel, so it might seem childish to carp at what is left out. It would be fairer instead to say that the Citizens' Company have tried through various devices to convey many of the themes that people who know the novel might miss in the dramatic action. Blaise's only presence, for example, is through the painting, which also serves to suggest Balbec and the Normandy coast, while the novelist Bergotte is reduced to the name alone, when Charles (in commanding performance by Giles Haverall) offers one of his works to the young Marcel.

To the series of picture-frames is added the device of having Rachel's performance to the Verdurins before audience open and close the play—and, indeed, the

theme of the artist as the drawing-room performer for an excruciatingly narcissistic class is brought out extremely well. On the whole, in presenting Proust's social dimension, his comedy of manners, which are most evident. Although clearly drawn to the camp element in many of Proust's scenes, the company have not, as they might have done, pushed it too far, except possibly in including Albertine in a sleazy brothel line-up in the central act.

It is in this central act, dominated by the huge image of the reclining courtesan, that many of the details of Prowse's conception develop. As the themes of jealousy and thwarted possession clash across the temporal depth of the stage, so the silent motionless clowns in the corners of the foreground remind us of the further depth of vision that is Proust's over Marcel's. But although the doubling of the roles of Albertine (Angela Christie) and Albert (Rupert Farley) is well executed, both the jealousy of Marcel and the fascination that Albertine should exercise are less successfully brought out. Perhaps the latter really suffers more than most aspects from the reversal of perspective, for the earlier Albertine (appearing in the third act) does achieve something of the girlish image that the older Marcel longs to lock up. It is Charles who really dominates the act. And in this case, the perspective reversal, in the relationship with the violinist Morel (Douglas Heard) positively enhances the desperation of Giles Haverall's old queen.

But the most successful scenes of all here belong, fittingly, to Swann (Paul Blake) and Odette (D. Trawley), who both manage the very difficult feat of portraying the full depth and range of the characters which the novel affords us at this point.

On the whole, the Citizens' have shown once again that they are a company of major ambition and achievement. There are few points—Joe Spurrier outdoes even Madame Verdurin in vulgarity—and it is a pity that the production threatens to lose sight of the play as a whole. Would they understand the play at all?

Changing cases

By D. A. N. Jones

The History of Mr Polly
BBC TV

I spy, with my little eye, something beginning with P—a grand parade of funny little blokes from the suburbs of London and other British cities, who are plied and patronised by the plutocrats. Will the little stretch out to the crack of doom? Mr Polly, Mr Pobjoy, Mr Podsnap, Mr Prohack, Mr Protuck, Mr Potter, Mr Pudge, all the Potters of Pottermar, Mr Popples, Mr Popplesworth, old Uncle Pentsimon and all.

Shall we include Painswick? Mary Poppins and the Pobble among the funny people in Eng Lit who begin with a P? No. That would spoil my thesis, inspired by the new BBC1 dramatization of *The History of Mr Polly*, going on at 8.30. The Mr Pp I am interested in are those upish little blokes who annoy people in lower-class society with their pretensions, their aspirations toward "higher things," and who, only, get into upper-class circles in some lower-class instructive them in proper manners.

H. G. Wells's Mr Polly is the daddy of them all—the little man with pretensions, trying to get the hell out of the collar-stud, cuff-link life and reach the Portwell Inn. Noel Coward and J. B. Priestley are two more of the good twentieth-century writers who were successful in considering and expressing Mr Polly's predicament. In television, the most distinguished descendant of Mr Polly is the "hero" of Dennis Potter's mad, brilliant play *Pennies*

from Heaven, played by Bob Hoskins.

You may remember the scene, from the book or from the old John Mills film, in which Mr Polly, by escaping on his bicycle, hurls by the wall of a private girls' school and begins to court Christabel, the teenage daddy's girl, in Pre-Raphaelite, knightly language with a south-of-the-river inflection. When he visits the well again, Christabel has brought her schoolgirl chums to eavesdrop on his exciting language and the whole courtship falls in ruins. This is the climax of the second instalment. The actress playing Christabel is a classy redhead called Glynnis Barber. She plays her role, excellently, much in the manner of Sally Anne Hoynes in the old movie, which ought to be revived for purposes of comparison while the new BBC adaptation is on view.

The style of the BBC version is a touch surrealistic. It has been well noted by George Melly that surrealism and late-Victorian painting have much in common—and there is a useful sidelight on this little book, which is a valuable contribution to the recent book *The State of the Language*, Wells's style of late-Victorian "realism" is very close to the surrealism of more modern dreamers. Barry Lettis, the BBC producer, remarked that one needs a comic, grotesque approach to capture the spirit of Wells's narrative: if taken too seriously, too literally, the story might seem miserable. Nothing could be less miserable than a comic. So he has equipped to play a man in his twenties and a man in his fifties: a rare talent, in an adaptation which deserves serious attention.

Oxford University Press

The Irish Journals of Elizabeth Smith 1840-1850

David Thomson with Myra McGusty

This selection from the journals of Elizabeth Smith of Ballinboys, County Wicklow, provides a graphic account of the effects of the Great Famine on the people of the country. From her vivid daily record can be derived insights into the economy, the lives of peasants and gentry, and the effects of government legislation. The journals are a major primary source for a critical period in nineteenth-century Irish history. £11

Winchester Studies, Volume 3

Pre-Roman and Roman Winchester Part II: The Roman Cemetery at Lankhills

Giles Clarke
Outside the north gate of *Ventia Belgarum*, Roman Winchester, a great cemetery stretched for 500 yards along the road to Cirencester. Excavations at Lankhills from 1967 to 1972 uncovered 451 graves at the northern limits of this cemetery, and dating from the fourth century A.D. This book describes the excavations of these burials and analyses in detail both the graves and their contents—perhaps the richest single group of fourth-century objects yet found in Britain. Illustrated £40

Daddyji Ved Mehta

At first glance *Daddyji* is a biographical portrait of Amolak Ram Mehta, a distinguished Indian public health officer—but as the story unfolds it is seen to be a recreation of a whole world: the everyday life of a legendary place and time. Ved Mehta's book is an affectionate portrait of his father: an ardent clubman, an irrepressible gambler, a charming man. Illustrated paper covers £2.25 Galaxy Books

Foreigner Stanley Roche and Grace Morton

The daughter of missionaries, Grace Morton was born in China in 1897. Her extraordinary life encompasses the north-western borders of Tibet and elegant Shanghai, an education for gentlemen in London and Cambridge, three dangerous years in Czechoslovakia, and ends in a provincial city in New Zealand. Stanley Roche has recorded the drama, the tragedy, and the humour of the eighty-two years during which Grace Morton remained what she was born, a "foreigner." £8.95

The Latin Tinge The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States

John Storm Roberts
The Latin Tinge is on almost every form of American music—from George Gershwin's to Stevie Wonder's—the most important outside influence. This is the first study of its influence on film, literature, music, and other aspects of Western culture. £8.50



"Portrait of Tristan Tzara" (1926), by Lajos Tihanyi, from the Arts Council's exhibition of Hungarian avant-garde painting "The Eight and the Activists" at the Hayward Gallery until April 7. The catalogue (£12.95, including 189 black-and-white plates. Paperback, £5 at the exhibition, £7.50 from booksellers) contains an introduction by John Wilson, a useful chronology and bibliography, and essays by Julia Szabo, Krystina Pasuth, Tamás Ákai and János Brendel.

A GUIDE TO COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN THE HUMANITIES
Susan Hockey (E28 and £8.50)

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ARISTOTLE'S THEORY E24
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WITTGENSTEIN ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF MATHEMATICS
Crispian Wright

THE EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAWS
P. G. Polytroch

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published through the 1930s can fail to see that the very few exceptions they owe their persistent authority to: eminently perceptible and brilliant phrases and images, rather than to any impact that they make as wholes. A poem that should be more than the sum of its brilliant parts was in those years seldom even attempted by those whom Auden influenced, but in the British context only by the aggressively unfashionable Robert Graves and by some of Graves's followers like Norman Cameron and James Reeves. The Audenesque style spoke to its age as the Gravesian style could not—spoke to it, I mean, in the sense of getting a hearing from it, grabbing its full and short-winded attention. For it was (and is indeed, for we live in it still) an age inured to the slogan and the catch-phrase, the caption, the headline and the punch-line. If poetry is to get a hearing from a public conditioned in this way—and of course, I do not mean a mass public, but the public that reads the so-called "quality" newspapers—poetry too must be "punchy", must be phrasemaking, as the young Auden's is, and the young Kenneth Allott's.

This is a poetry which takes its chances as they come, opportunist. And although pieces of poetry can come this way, it is clear that poems cannot. The odds are obviously against the poem's amounting to more than the sum of its brilliant incidental details, since by the rules of this particular game no over-arching conception can be allowed to enter in the way of giving opportunities as they unforeseeably present themselves. Surprisingly however, it sometimes happens—as it does, I think, in Allott's early poem, "Exodus", where it is particularly remarkable that it should since the poem begins with a two-line phrase so brilliantly Audenesque, so much of its period (almost to the point of self-parody) that the recently instituted "Thirties Society" could well adopt it as a club motto: From this wet island of birds and Who can watch suffering Europe and not be angry? For death can hardly be ridiculous. And the bustling hysteria of our rulers, Which seemed so funny in our fathers, Dictates the newscast for us. The small boy finds his jerseys small for him:

And we have outgrown our patriotic fauna With their St Vitus behaviour, Seeing beyond our noses A land never to flow with milk and honey. But a winter a stonehenge off and no more roses. And I imagine sometimes might even attempt by those whom Auden influenced, but in the British context only by the aggressively unfashionable Robert Graves and by some of Graves's followers like Norman Cameron and James Reeves. The Audenesque style spoke to its age as the Gravesian style could not—spoke to it, I mean, in the sense of getting a hearing from it, grabbing its full and short-winded attention. For it was (and is indeed, for we live in it still) an age inured to the slogan and the catch-phrase, the caption, the headline and the punch-line. If poetry is to get a hearing from a public conditioned in this way—and of course, I do not mean a mass public, but the public that reads the so-called "quality" newspapers—poetry too must be "punchy", must be phrasemaking, as the young Auden's is, and the young Kenneth Allott's.

What happens here is that the brilliant phrase with which the poem opens is equalled and surpassed by the even more glittering constellation of phrases in the third stanza, about the "pasty" wonder of the slum; and this has the effect of making the alternation of these stanzas with the relatively sober even-numbered stanzas function like a satisfying structural principle. Let me not suppose from what I have said about opportunism and phrasemaking that I am at all disposed to condescend to a poem like this. On the contrary, as a poet who has written and published in Britain through the 1950s and 1970s, I reflect with envious admiration how tough-minded our poetry could afford to be, so short a time ago.

Just try telling, now in 1980, the admirers of Edward Thomas (a great poet, but grossly sentimentalized by his readers) that "this rural world is dead like Greek"! Or try comparing the "stunted pasty wonder of the slum" with "a cracked bicycle frame". On which a short vocabulary is hung, and you will be told that you shamefully lack humane fellow-feeling with the underprivileged, if indeed you are not also told that his "stout vocabulary", since it's all he has, is the vocabulary to which you should restrict yourself if you are not to be "elitist". And who now is allowed to rock our frail national consensus by asking



Kenneth Allott

How shall we live except as plants and of the "Remarkable sanctus of the stuka and the wheel". Mountains are said to be "snug" but big pages later, even more remarkably, "sedentary" years are said to be at once "candid" and "ridiculous". And we are told that "Our music is Settling of dust as strict as centuries". (That last example comes with a wonderful whiff of period; for "strict" was one of the most okay words in the Audenesque lexicon.)

Each of these adjectives, we can be sure, was well-chosen by that uttering ear for what it does in terms of alliteration and assonance, and also evidence. And they perform another function; as we can see if we string a lot of them together: "Silly", "perfunctory", "imbecile", "ungainly", "snug", "ridiculous"—they effortlessly establish the speaker's tone as superior and disinterested. And in this there is a certain comedy and even a pathos, when we recollect that the author of these poems wasn't yet thirty. What none of them do is what the grammar-books tell us an adjective ought to do; that is to say, qualify or further specify or illuminate the noun which it is attached to. So far from forcing us to attend more closely to the things named—so mountains or streams or willows, hours or hymns or distances—these adjectives have intended, sending us always off at a tangent.

On the other hand a price was paid, alike by Auden and by Allott. And we locate it—where else?—in a detail of their language. Their phrase-making depends quite disproportionately on a trick with epithets. (So does Allen Tate's at the same period, on the other side of the Atlantic.) There are two instances even in the poem we have just admired.

To lift transparent hands to the amazing Sky and blow full-time.

For he is mocked both in and out of season On this and all the other silly shores.

Why is the sky called "amazing" and why "The graduate, senior called 'silly'". The graduate, senior called "silly" can be left to come up, as it always can, with plausible answers. But can any one really believe that in either case the epithet chosen was the one right word, the not just? The three syllables in the one case, and the two in the other, could surely have been expended to better purpose—and would have been, by a poet who had taken note, for instance, of Ezra Pound's appraisal of "The Waste Land" as "the best of modern poetry" and of "The Waste Land" as "the best of modern poetry". The three syllables in the one case, and the two in the other, could surely have been expended to better purpose—and would have been, by a poet who had taken note, for instance, of Ezra Pound's appraisal of "The Waste Land" as "the best of modern poetry" and of "The Waste Land" as "the best of modern poetry".

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Although Allott can attend to things (as in his wonderful line, "The window of a jelly in the sand"), he is not very often interested in doing so; mostly things are named in his poems not for their own sakes but only so as to maintain the poet's talk with, or talk at, his readers. Mountains are named in his poems, not so that we may attend to them or to what they are, but in such a way as to switch or deflect or maintain or re-align our interest in the voice that names them.

Allott's interest is in steering the responses of his reader; and it is assumed that terms from the non-human world have no significance or value in themselves, but only as an array of mediating terms through which human beings can communicate. It is a thoroughly respectable way to take—not just of poetry, but of the reality which we all inhabit. One word for it is "phrasemaking", since it elevates human relations to a status infinitely superior to all other relations, such as the relation between a man and a mountain, or between a man and whatever it is that made mountains. In the 1930s such phrasemaking created a new sort of criticism, associated with the names of J. A. Richards and William Empson and later F. R. Leavis, which taught us to examine all poems as a sequence of signals or judgements given by the poet to his readers. The poet's task is to direct their responses. And Allott's poetry answers to such criticism, as it does to the criticism of the

Because this is the view of poetry, and of criticism that mostly we live with, it is hard for us to realize that it has its dangers. We can become aware of them if we recall a point made earlier—the young Auden's sort of poetry lives easily along with the caption and the catch-phrase, the headline and the punch-line. The view of poetry collapses into the view of the poet and of the poet into the view of the poet. rhetorically, whereas, not continually, indeed, but repeatedly, through the ages ever since Plato it has been asserted that the poet another, more exalted. To be blunt about it, no one can draw a line between steering and responses, and manipulating the other. Time is

And this I think is the point at which to tackle the awkward and dispiriting problem of Allott's second collection, *The Ventriquist's Doll*. There has been a general agreement that this represents a notable falling-off from the first collection, *Poems*. But understandably, no one who has noticed it has been able to account for it with any confidence. Certainly it was not a calamity peculiar to Allott, for many poets who have been assured and prolific through the years when the war impinged began to stammer and stumble, and the war had arrived. Perhaps the most conspicuous case is Stephen Spender, who in the 1940s fell into an awkward silence which in its years since has been interpreted, not much more frequently and in order to his writing, though he himself is obliged to cross the desert and to remake himself, in some important respects, as an American poet rather than a British one.

One difficulty was, for the poet who stayed at home, that if he were in any way patriotic he wanted in wartime to express feelings of national solidarity; and this meant that they had to assume an idiom which as we have seen in Allott's case (though the same is true of Auden and others), was the idiom of the perceptive and candid. But Auden and others, who had many Obuses or not, the reality they had hectoring and prodding were now manifesting the aircraft ships, and the tanks. And so he had now to be addressed in a tone; but that tone was outside the range of the pre-war idiom. It seems to be the difficulty that Allott wrestled with in a poem from *The Ventriquist's Doll* called "People are Real", which he roughly lives up (or down) to in an embarrassing title, and in which he hurls himself as much as his readers are never to try to be. The speaker eagle above the Khyber passes the spirit's high places, or the remembered sea. "The trouble is a course that it had been just this 'sneering eagle' who had 'sneered' before, found mountains 'snug' or 'sedentary'". But I don't want to quote from *The Ventriquist's Doll*, nor do I trust myself to comment on it any more than I have to. For the fact is that I find these poems infected by the nervous and habits which I have sought to fight through, and fight against, when I began publishing my own poems only a few years later; and those struggles are not too vivid in my memory for me to be temperate when I encounter writing that reminds me of Dylan Thomas or the young George Barker. For these are the writers that I am reminded of, along with Auden, when I read *The Ventriquist's Doll*.

What I think now, in all fairness to Allott, was that this development was inevitable. His movement from *Poems* in 1938 to *The Ventriquist's Doll* in 1943 encompasses one of the most reseeded English poetry between 1930 and 1940. For in hindsight we can see it as predictable that the decade, which began with the phrasemaking of W. Auden and continued with the phrasemaking of Dylan Thomas. To be sure, the decade was also the decade of the "sneering eagle" who had "sneered" before, found mountains "snug" or "sedentary". But I don't want to quote from *The Ventriquist's Doll*, nor do I trust myself to comment on it any more than I have to. For the fact is that I find these poems infected by the nervous and habits which I have sought to fight through, and fight against, when I began publishing my own poems only a few years later; and those struggles are not too vivid in my memory for me to be temperate when I encounter writing that reminds me of Dylan Thomas or the young George Barker. For these are the writers that I am reminded of, along with Auden, when I read *The Ventriquist's Doll*.

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they will obligingly supply the conclusion that you have suppressed. You may not be clear about yourself, but you can't press your luck. You will more, in confidence that your readers will bridge that wider gap also? I am not describing any sort of charlatanism, but on the contrary, a serious experiment, seriously pursued, by some under the banner of "surrealism". And this is the experiment that Allott conducts on many pages of his second collection. The bizarre epithets are no longer much in evidence. In their place comes a preoccupation with the simile, plainly announced by the adjective "like". In a poem called "Elegy", the abstraction "Time" is the first term in no less than thirteen similes, one after the other. Time is

like a doctor struck off the register. Shuffling down a back street with a pill

To make you ill anywhere. It is also "like the smell of a fox's urine" and "like the extruded hernia of a middle-aged goosestepping galleiter". But then it is "like a dream of summer and tea-roses", but also like "a paper suit of Stock Exchange prices" for Morgan's men holding their noses. It is "like the wasp-like drone of a Lutheran hymn", but not any more than it is like "the collier's ache in the amputated limb". And finally we are offered, as it were to make sure that everybody gets something in his liking:

Time like the back-payments on a bedroom suite, Or the Berlitz tongue-endowing paraclete, Or a woman breaking her waters for a man-child, Or an early Elzevir, or the Koh-i-noor, Or the lines of force in a magnetic field, Or a Black Maria waiting for a blackmailer.

What are we to say of this, except that it gives us the poem as an invitation to free associating by any means, every reader who happens along. In this way it is a poem of widely recognized around 1943, and as the vast popularity of Dylan Thomas was to show—profoundly democratic. And of course some readers are so gratified by such an invitation that they look for it in every poem they read, and are disappointed when they don't find it. Other readers worry a little that poetry written on this free-for-all understanding seems rather different from poetry written by Ben Jonson or John Donne.

Raising a laugh

By Jean-Yves Tadié

MAYA SLATER: *Humour in the Works of Proust*. Clarendon Press, Oxford. Pp. 288. £8.50. 19 815534 4

MARGARET MEIN: *Thèmes proustiens*. Belp. Paris. Pp. 120.

The stories which Kant tells in the *Critique of Judgment* in order to define the comic have never made much laugh; and this is one of the obstacles facing any book on humour. In literature, despite the efforts at persuasion which writers make, the examples they give are not funny, once removed from their context. Another obstacle consists in the actual definition of the word "humour". It will be used, writes Maya Slater, to include all the elements which are often subdivided into "wit", "farce", "sarcasm", "satire", "irony", "hippity", and so on. Could anyone be more precise? And yet, if we know what the comic is, we do not know how to define it; which is one of the last unresolved problems of literature.

However, Dr. Slater has written a book on humour in Proust's work which is all in a la recherche—pursuing a quest, well made and elegant, for the comic in Proust's work. The method she follows is the classical stylistic method of Stephen Ullmann and Walter Dill Scott. Thus she studies humour in Proust's style, in his narrative technique, in his images, in his metaphors, in his relationship with the author and his reader, and in his cultural, social, and political

And the poet, Allott, who found himself in the logic of his own talent and his own times into writing poems like this, thereafter over thirty years published hardly any poems at all. You will see the conclusion I would push you to: that Allott, having written himself into this untenable corner, did not know what he was doing, knew that there was no respectable precedent for it, and, rather than push the irresponsible experiment further, elected to fall silent. This is the alternative I propose to Roy Fuller's suggestion that Allott's talent simply terminated; on the contrary it perished, but Allott, because he saw that it was corrupted, elected no longer to indulge it. Which is, I suggest, very greatly to his credit; according to a scale of values which is indeed humanist, though not necessarily either infidel or democratic.

I could cite inconclusive but suggestive evidence in support of this, from what Allott wrote in the two editions of his *Penguin Book of Contemporary Verse*, particularly in the second edition (1961) where he showed himself far more than most of his contemporaries sympathetic to post-war poetry. But I have chosen to go for evidence only to the body of Allott's own verse; and so I can cite only the handful of poems that punctuate his last thirty years of silence. Few are they, these I believe support my contention.

It would be wrong to say that in these late poems Allott regained the assurance and the *bravura* of *Poems* (1938). On the contrary the late poems are muted and modest—alike in their aims and their rhetoric. And they provide nothing to equal an early poem such as "Patch", triumphantly through-composed, sound and sense welding and weaving together from first to last. But out of these late poems I would pick out, as admirable, along with "Moon in November" which I have quoted already, "Late Augustan", "Typed with Two Fingers", "A Fable", and in particular a touchingly vulnerable poem, "Cheating Cat". That index is of unprecedented things in these late poems—in them Allott finds a style in which to lay himself open, open to being hurt; whereas his earlier rhetoric had functioned as suits of historical armour, inside which the poet, the speaker, could remain invulnerable and unseen. In my experience that development, to words vulnerability, is normal as a poet moves from youth into middle age; and in Allott we see such a development, though strikingly

attenuated. Particularly remarkable, on this count though on others also, is the very last poem in *Collected Poems*, one which Mrs. Allott tells me she put together uncertainly out of very blurred pencillings.

Words are not subtle enough to say how it is. Waking all night with the rain. Feathered and Aztec hiss (O drizzle of milk slate-stone). Until the lost window is square and solid again. And the clochopper sun surprises Grief who might always have been there and probably was —how at home he is all at once taking your case.

So hard to tell how it seems (and you so cross-patch and feeble) Your eyes red-rimmed and the air how he does not bother at all. Sparring no time and no trouble Who is really too easy to please Wanting no entertainment. See with what discernment He gets down to, sweet Christ, when he gets you down on your knees.

The bravura poet of the Thirties is still here, in the masterly synaesthesia of the line about the rain, "Feathered and Aztec hiss (O drizzle of milk slate-stone)". But we note that this is thrown off munificently, passed on, on our way to a less glittering but much more probing sort of language. What brings us up with a jolt, of course, is the vehement interjection, "sweet Christ", in the very last line. What are we to make of this? Is it indeed an interjection, a blas-

phemous expletive? Undoubtedly that is partly what it is. But to make of it no more than that makes the poem and unsatisfactorily on a gust of baffled fury brought in as it were from outside the poem, not tying up anything that preceding lines have put before us. On the other hand, if we make "sweet Christ" into a *cri de coeur*, a genuine appeal, the Redeemer, we must feel like Bishop Burnet at the death-bed of the notorious reprobate Rochester, determined to bully the dying man into something that shall edify the faithful. The agnostic humanism of the lapsed Roman Catholic Allott cannot be cancelled out so confidently on the score of one disputed phrase from what seems to be his very last poem. So what are we to do? It was only after I had read the poem several times, and thought about it a lot, that a third possibility presented itself. And this I now present to you as the only reading that does the poem justice. "Sweet Christ", so far as it is not a simple expletive, is to be taken as a phrase in apposition to "Grief", and so it is Grief (personified, and does all the things specified in the second stanza, up to and including getting down on its knees when it has beaten us to ours. In this way "Grief" is brought perilously close to self-pity, and yet distinguished from it, because seen as redemptive, probing sort of language. What brings us up with a jolt, of course, is the vehement interjection, "sweet Christ", in the very last line. What are we to make of this? Is it indeed an interjection, a blas-

Let me, then, sum up. I contend

that Allott was not at the mercy of his great talent, but on the contrary in command of it. When I say that he elected for the most part to silence his talent when he had come to distrust it, I do not suppose that the choice ever presented itself to him in such explicit terms—as if one could think to find, in some diary he might have left behind him, the choice recorded in so many words on some specified date. I envisage rather that on many occasions through his later years, when an idea for a poem came to him, he responded by saying in effect, "Oh, no, that sort of thing again!" or else, "For God's sake, who do I think I am? George Barker?" Poems do not have to be written. Though it is quite true that they originate in something mysterious, a visitation, the poet is at liberty to shut the door against his visitor, and even has the duty to do so when he knows or suspects that the visitor is a demon, not an angel. It has been said that talent, in poetry as in the other arts, is not in fact at all rare; what is rare is the quality of character in the artist which knows what to do with the talent bestowed, how to serve it and yet not be mastered by it. The artist is not, by his talent, absolved from the civic responsibilities that are laid upon him as on any other citizen. He is not a licensed naïf. If we see Kenneth Allott's life as in this way a triumph of character, that, even more than his great and never-to-be-forgotten talent, is what dignifies this series of lectures instituted in his name.

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The documents at the Wake

By Philip Gaskell

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tion
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The documents that were involved in the making of Joyce's books are his manuscript notes, drafts, and fair copies, and the typescripts and printed proofs which he corrected and revised—survive in enormous numbers, especially from 1914 onwards. They are of central importance to the understanding and appreciation of his works, and above all *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. In most prose fiction the meaning of the words, if they are rightly transcribed, is usually apparent without the need to consult the author's working papers; but for much of Joyce's writings satisfactory exegesis often depends on recourse to the readings of the early versions of the text. Those readers and students who care about Joyce's precise meaning, and he is an author who stimulates particularly, so they are numerous—would often be glad to have access to the pre-publication material.

Hitherto this has been very difficult to get, for most of the documents are distributed among three English, two Irish, and thirteen American institutional libraries; none of the libraries may lend out the originals and two of them (which have two of the most important collections of Joyce manuscripts) have been until recently

rigidly opposed to allowing photographic copies of their Joyce manuscripts to be supplied to anybody.

Now the situation is dramatically changed, for practically all the surviving pre-publication documents of Joyce's works have been published in photographic facsimile, starting with the appearance in 1976 of a three-volume facsimile of the Rosenbach manuscript of *Ulysses*, and completed now with the prodigious sixty-four-volume *James Joyce Archive*. The Archive consists of facsimiles of over 99 per cent of Joyce's surviving manuscripts, typescripts, and proofs (taken from the Rosenbach manuscript), the letters, and biographical documents, and it is a tour de force of editing and publishing. At about £2,000 the set, the Archive is too expensive for private ownership by any but a few, but many university libraries will buy it, with the result that Joyceans can now use facsimiles of documents which they could not formerly consult at all without making costly and time-consuming transatlantic journeys.

For close bibliographical study it will still be necessary to examine the original manuscript, but for most textual work these facsimiles, which are unretouched copyfolds from microfilm, are good enough; and indeed their high contrast sometimes makes them easier to read than the manuscripts themselves. The main disadvantage of high-contrast reproduction is that it does not indicate either the texture of the original paper or the medium—pen, pencil, crayon, top copy, carbon copy, etc.—with which it was inscribed. It would clearly have been impracticable to include adequate descriptions in the Archive of all the closely similar sorts of paper used by Joyce and his typists, but it would have been easy enough to indicate in a footnote the medium used to inscribe each page, and it is a pity that this was not done.

systematically. Joyce's coloured crayons, alone, are indicated, either in the sections of volumes 12 and 28 which are reproduced in full colour, or in endnotes to the black and white reproductions. Of the other manuscripts which contain marks in coloured crayons, an odd fault is the total lack of volume numbers (which are essential for reference) printed either in or on any of the Archive volumes, though it is said that the publishers will supply purchasers with volume-number labels to stick on for themselves. Apart from this, the production of the Archive is admirable: the typography is handsome, the paper is strong and pleasant to handle.

The sixty-three volumes of facsimiles, which are to be followed by the index volume later this year, are divided into eight sections. The first five sections, dealing with the works other than *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, consist of the version in one volume, edited by Walton Litz; miscellaneous notes, critical writings, etc., in two volumes, edited by Hans Gahler; three volumes of Dubliners, edited by Gahler, which include the Irish Homestead texts of three of the stories, the surviving manuscripts, and the proofs of 1910 and 1914; *A Portrait* in four volumes, edited by Gahler, including the 1904 essay, the epistles, and the surviving manuscripts of both *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait*; and *Exiles*, in one volume, edited by Litz.

The last three sections of the Archive, one for *Ulysses* and two for *Finnegans Wake*, are on a much larger scale than the first five. There are sixteen volumes of *Ulysses*, edited by Michael Groden (who is also the General Editor of the whole series), which contain all the surviving notes, hothouses, drafts, fair copies, typescripts, and proofs of the book (except for the Rosenbach manuscript). The *Ulysses* texts are not included; which is a pity since they provide essential versions of parts of the texts of "Calypso", "Lotus, eaters", and "Hades", where the Rosenbach manuscript is not in the main line script is missing.

The material for *Ulysses* is grouped by types of document, the manuscripts and typescripts for each episode in turn

gathered in volumes 12 to 16, the placard proofs in volumes 17 to 21, and the page proofs in volumes 22 to 27. This arrangement means that, in order to follow a particular passage through its successive textual stages, the reader has to consult three Archive volumes and a Rosenbach volume, and in some cases a *Little Review* volume as well if he can find it. This is not as simple as it would have been if the material had been grouped by episodes rather than by types of document. Michael Groden contributes a valuable preface to each group of *Ulysses* documents.

The pre-publication material for *Finnegans Wake* fills thirty-six Archive volumes—more than all the rest put together—and is divided into two sections: first the great series of notebooks at Buffalo, with 14,000 notebook pages reproduced chronologically in sixteen Archive volumes, beginning with the well-known "Scrabble-hobble" notebook, and continuing with another forty-eight notebooks which constitute an immensely rich but virtually unused source for the investigation of *Finnegans Wake*. The second section of twenty Archive volumes devoted to *Finnegans Wake*, which like the first is edited by David Hayman and Danis Goff, reproduces all the manuscript drafts, typescripts, and printed proofs of *Finnegans Wake* chapter by chapter (the best way for following a passage through its successive textual stages), plus the galley proofs of Book I, and the transition proofs of Book III.

Most of this section comes from the enormous *Finnegans Wake* collection at the British Library, rearranged and edited by Hayman and Rose with devoted skill. The documents for each chapter of the book are introduced by Hayman's preface, and are analysed in Rose's Reader's Guide which details the processes of their composition and explains their arrangement in the Archive. The result is still complex, inevitably so since the relationship between the original documents is not simple, but this section of the Archive makes the complex of *Finnegans Wake* much easier to follow than before.

The index volume (which appears later this year) will provide a checklist of all the documents for each of Joyce's works, with references to their appearance in the Archive, and with separate checklists of the

holdings of the various libraries. It will be an essential tool for Archive users, though it is not clear that it does not give references to the Rosenbach facsimile of *Ulysses*, which is a more awkward system of page arrangement and lacks running headlines.

Philip Harring's *Joyce's Notes and Early Drafts for Ulysses* has been written before publication of the Archive was decided upon. It consists of annotated transcripts of the documents now published in the *Ulysses* section of the Archive, which are perhaps lucky to have all. Harring begins with two of two collections of notes, *Ulysses* which bracket the Library notesheets of 1910, published in a transcript in 1911, for which earlier publications (including a list of his earlier drafts, for transcripts of two early "Cyclops" and two for "Eveline") after his death, she asked the publisher to compile and publish a definitive catalogue of his work— a loose but realistic interpretation of Pollock's somewhat ambiguous request. The project suffered various vicissitudes over the next fifteen years, and finally, in 1972, the second of the two editors was approved and the Marlborough Gallery to whom the Pollock Estate had passed, fulfilled its side of the bargain by giving considerable financial assistance to Yale University Press, thus making publication possible. The editors completed their task of tracking down, identifying and dating over 1,000 paintings, drawings, prints and a variety of work in less easily classifiable media in December of 1975, so that details of ownership and references to monographs, articles and exhibitions were up to date at the time of going to press in 1976. The fact that *Pollock*, one of a group of important paintings executed in 1943, at the time of Pollock's first one-man show for Peggy Guggenheim, was shown in London in 1978 at the Dada and Surrealism exhibition is, for example, not recorded. The division of the results of this enterprise into four volumes

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The anarchic ark

By Peter Lewis

NO BESKOW:

Two by Two
Translated from the Swedish by
Tom Giddes
128pp, Bodley Head, £4.50.
0 370 30223 0

Imagine an Ingmar Bergman movie about Noah's Flood, cut more crisply than usual, and with some of the sex and violence subordinated to a Pasolini and a Peckinpah, and you have some idea of the pervasive tone of this grim fable about the human condition. Filmmic comparisons suggest themselves because this short, compact novel is so extraordinarily visual, even though Ben Beskow does not indulge in long descriptive passages. He has the knack of conjuring up photographic pictures of life on the Ark, the Ark itself, and its prevailing gloomy, oppressive atmosphere, without resorting to excessive word-painting. In depicting a world in which darkness and shadows are prominent, his palette is often limited to dark pigments, but there are sudden explosions of bright colours, as in the hallucinogenic experience of the hemp-smoking Jashub and the divinely originated body-murders on his wife. In some respects, then, *Two by Two* reads like a painter's novel, and this is precisely what it is. Beskow, now in his mid-seventies, is a well-known Swedish portrait painter and artist who has worked in various materials, notably stained glass, and whose murals adorn the UN building in New York. He has also published several books in Sweden, only one of which is known here (his study of his friend Dag Hammarskjöld). But this is his debut as a novelist, and even in the history of fiction where late starts are common enough, it is uncommonly late.

What Beskow has done is to take the Genesis account of the Flood and to isolate for detailed treatment that momentous day, the one hundred and fiftieth, when "the waters

were abated". Where Genesis is non-naturalistic and mythic, Beskow is extremely realistic, although the initial realism shades increasingly into expressionist distortion and the grotesque, on the one hand, and into whimsical fantasy and black comedy, on the other. In literalizing the Old Testament myth, Beskow's imagination creates a gruesome picture of what conditions might have been like on the Ark after several months at sea: dung heaps, an appalling stench, animals eating their young, swarms of flies, hordes of rats and mice, mealworms in the flour, food supplies running out. It is not a neat, orderly, hygienic arrangement of animals in pairs, but a world of continual birth and death—the smell of blood hung heavy and sticky in the air. . . . A crunching of bones could be heard from the nether regions". To ascend the hierarchy of natural creation, the upper decks where the human life is conducted brings little relief from squalor, although here the squalor is as much moral as physical. From the first page, animal imagery is used extensively to describe some of the characters and their behaviour, so that the distinction between the human and the animal aboard the Ark is blurred, and in the symbolically deformed Jashub's case there is almost total identification with the animal. No wonder his mother tried to commit suicide and his wife attempts to murder him by throwing him overboard.

The novel opens with a bang, indeed, a veritable catalogue of horrors. Ham's pleasureless copulation with his hostile wife, her masturbation, his attempt to rape his pregnant sister-in-law (which results in his being pounded to pulp and left for dead by his brother), and Jashub's sexual assault on Ham's wife (which results in a virtual amputation of his penis). After such unheroic acts, what can follow? Not more of the same, owing to physical disability, although ancient Noah is seduced by one of his daughters-in-law while he supposedly communing with God, and when the Lord actually visits the Ark to see how things are, He impregnates Shem's wife (the de-

vout and abstinent Shem is obviously failing to respond to the divine command to increase and multiply).

Despite the chronicle of unpleasant and far from gratuitous sex and violence, it is boredom, claustrophobia, frustration and the endless routine of mucking-out that form, for the most part, the lot of the humans. Noah secretly consoles himself with drink, Jashub with drugs. Yet the day of the narrative turns out to be very unlike other days for two reasons. Jashub releases the male lion, and though the lion himself causes no serious damage (he is on good terms with Japheth, with whom he whimsically indulges in a ritual but harmless fight) his release precipitates the accidental release of all the animals, and the carnage that ensues is, of course, a miniature holocaust. The arrival of the bullerian-like Lord, who takes time off from his other cosmic responsibilities to pick up the threads of His destruction on Earth, also has major consequences, although these are implied rather than stated. He is horrified at what has gone wrong on Earth as a result of human evil and folly, and is concerned to patch things up as best He can; but there is also a sense of hopelessness about His mission.

Despite the dung-encrusted realism of much of the narrative, *Two by Two* is a symbolic novel, really a fable, in which the Ark is a microcosmic metaphor for the world itself, a world that does not feature prominently in the mind of its fickle and ironic Creator and that seems fully to deserve periodic destructive cataclysms. Humankind is just a jangle that runs through Alan Johnson's head, one of the juvenile rhymes he uses to suppress feeling. It's an indulgence that bothers him, like self-abuse: "Shut up I thought, brushing the back of his hand quickly across his eyes. Bloody soppy rhymes!" But in moments of conflict or indecision, the rhymes take over. Alan's head fills and his mouth remains closed, so that he gains a reputation for wisdom and docility, which is not entirely unjustified.

Alan is a painfully humdrum boy (twelve when the novel opens, and eighteen or so at its end) who does his best in somewhat disheartening circumstances, enduring without complaint a life of tedium on a housing estate. He is polite to the elderly, kind to his little brother Kevin, and tolerant of the shortcomings of his mother Sophie, an off-handed and irresponsible parent. None of this suggests potential delinquency, and indeed Alan is

turned into a mulefactor by his failure to respond to the divine command to increase and multiply.

By Patricia Craig

DEE PHILLIPS:
No, Not I
190pp, Hodder and Stoughton, £5.50.
0 340 25048 8.

In 1963, Brigid Brophy remarked that novelists often feel on safer ground "if some extraneous importance"—usually a sociological one—can be claimed for their work. It's depressing to note that the tendency continues. The case-history made over as fiction requires a very sure touch, an oblique angle of vision or a literary objective transcending the documentary one, to bring it off. Unfortunately none of these qualities can be found in Dee Phillips's first novel, a solid, pains-taking, well-meaning account, by an ex-teacher and practising psychotherapist, of the factors involved in a case of emotional maladjustment.

The title strikes an infelicitous note to start with. Apart from the fact that the stressed negative makes it unsubstantial to the point of meaninglessness, the implications are all wrong for the novel is not a care for nobody, no, not I. And nobody cares for me" is the burden of the fully miller's song, and it's delivered with a kind of rollicking independence which is totally alien to the character of Dee Phillips's rather glum protagonist. The song is just a jangle that runs through Alan Johnson's head, one of the juvenile rhymes he uses to suppress feeling. It's an indulgence that bothers him, like self-abuse: "Shut up I thought, brushing the back of his hand quickly across his eyes. Bloody soppy rhymes!" But in moments of conflict or indecision, the rhymes take over. Alan's head fills and his mouth remains closed, so that he gains a reputation for wisdom and docility, which is not entirely unjustified.

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Scars of war

By A. N. Wilson

CHRISTOPHER MATTHEW:

The Long-Haired Boy
248pp, Hamish Hamilton, £6.50.
0 21 10332 0

The Long-Haired Boy is a simple story which achieves its moving effects without any false manipulation of emotion. Hugh Fleming, a brilliant, beautiful, rather snotty young Scotian aged 20, is one of the few who defended this country in the air during the summer of 1940. Like Yeats's *Arrival*, he is being a fighter pilot as the last opportunity in modern warfare for the heroism of single combat, and he more than lives up to his ideals, in the cockpit of his Spitfire, when he takes on six German 109s in a single encounter. The result of all these heroics, however, is that his plane catches fire and he parachutes out, much too late, sustaining ludicrous burns all over his face and body.

With devastating persistence and unerring good sense, Mr. Matthews' novel tells how Hugh comes to terms with life when the extent of his injuries is made known to him. From being a golden young boy, arrogantly certain of his own charms with women, he has to learn to live with being physically hideous.

Two people, his sister and a fellow-sufferer, in the convalescent home, tell him that the calamity will reveal who his true friends are. It is not an easy revelation for Hugh, who has had a glittering social and academic career, and hopes to do great things when the war is over. Indeed, as his sister mercilessly points out, until he is burnt, he has loved no one but himself, and he has not seen the need for friendship in the real sense of the word.

The lessons are cruel. His fiancée, a bright young lion, feels love draining out of her as she gazes at his burnt face in the hospital. His lovely mother, who has been even-

tually allowed to go home, screams at the sight of him and thinks he is a monster. He has much to suffer and much to learn before he can marry his rather plain physiotherapist, Marjorie. If one upbids what these lessons are—their value more important than smartness or grandeur; that we need to recognize our dependence on other people before we can be strong.

Mr Fleming does avoid the pitfalls, by a skilful and quite unpretentious realism. For instance, Hugh's physical sensations are conveyed with uncanny and convincing accuracy. From the moment, para-chuting down in flames, his legs appeared to have grown a pair of white plus fours" to the ghastly first glimpse of himself in the hospital mirror much later on, the author presents the sensations straight; there is nothing markish, nothing unconvincing. Again, though much of the book is heart-rending, it is funny. Even Hugh himself, appalled by the new nose fitted to his face by the plastic surgeon, is a particularly welcome exception to the rule.

Now refreshing to read a novel which has a moral, a good, strong, entirely believable story (it is loosely based on the life of Richard Hillary), and a beginning, a middle, and an end. The characters are sympathetically drawn and convincing in every detail. It will remain a book for a long time. Hugh's first hospital visit from his hopelessly diffident parents; or his touching encounter with the girl in London; or his conversations with Melkio, the plastic surgeon. The quality of the writing is flawless, and not only the least a writer, and not only the criticism of the book is the simple one that it contains a large number of important typographical errors: whether the fault of the copy-editor, the compositor, or the printers' compositors, it is a pity that the book is not perfect.

Defending democracy

By Michael Butler

HERNICH BOLL:

Fürsorgliche Belagerung
415pp, Cologne: Klempner and Witsch, DM34.

If it is true, as it is sometimes alleged that the real history of the Federal Republic of Germany is to be read not in scholarly treatises nor in official documents, but in the country's narrative fiction, Heinrich Boll must surely rank as one of West Germany's leading contemporary historians. Amid the self-congratulatory celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of the West German State last year, Boll's new novel must have appeared, however, as a particularly unwelcome challenge to the feast. And indeed, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* proves to be a further substantial instalment of the Nobel Laureate's uncompromising critique of this fledgling democracy. The novel offers an uncomfortable alternative view of the late 1970s, condemning the political line as a "bourgeois system" which has created the wealth that allows them to pursue their alternative lifestyles. Thus the generation gap is no longer depicted in traditional terms of conflict; there is rather a resigned and melancholy acceptance of the main characters and their world. The manipulators are largely presented as hollow, materialistic and economic forces as the manipulated.

To convey this ambiguous situation, Boll employs a shifting narrative perspective which enables single characters to move at length on their own, and to be seen in the context of the whole. The development of individual characters is not the immediate

period, for example, are set against the background of the views of the younger generation of drop-outs who try to reconstruct their lives away from conventional pressures. Far from putting forward any utopian vision of a new, violent society, however, Boll is strict in himself in a sober depiction of small and vulnerable human beings emerging from the threatening shadows of a state which appears to be destroying not only the environment but also the individual. The novel is for short-term profit but the very democratic ideal it claims to be defending.

Fürsorgliche Belagerung is an ambitious book which touches many of the controversies that have arisen in the 1970s in West Germany: "Porno-Welle", the "Bewegung", the "Green" movement, the insidious development and extension of police surveillance techniques, the media, and also some of the familiar weaknesses. For example, many of the characters are shown as being "out of touch" with reality, the constant attack on the Catholic Church is a shrill, the repeated suggestion of universal moral turpitude is too crudely predictable, above all, the belief in the goodness and integrity of the socially deprived is sentimental. Yet, despite these limitations, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* succeeds in underlining the conjunction of literature and society; in his dogged way, Boll keeps the novel accessible to a public and in its honest, unflinching way, it throws a sharp revealing light on the contemporary scene.

The story of Fritz Tönn, elected as a member of parliament and